



**WELCOMING
CHILDREN
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA**



The Good Samaritan

February

Adaptive Activities for Children



**National Catholic
Partnership on Disability**

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

Prayer

Leader: We believe that God loves us and that we are all God's children. Today we are learning about the story of the Good Samaritan. This story teaches us to be kind and help others, even when it is hard. We can also do kind acts of service to help people around us. We are going to start with a prayer inspired by the words of Pope Francis. In this prayer, we ask God to help us love others and show kindness every day.

The prayer asks some questions. I'm going to pause after each question so you can say, "Yes, Lord." Let's practice. Is he my neighbor?

All: **Yes, Lord.**

Sign of the Cross.

Lord Jesus,

You teach us in your parable that there are two kinds of people--
--those who bend down to help and those who look the other way.
Which kind of people will we be?

We say, "Yes, Lord, I will love you and love my neighbor."

But then we ask:

Leader: The migrant... is she my neighbor?

All: **Yes, Lord.**

Leader: Those in poverty...are they my neighbors?

All: **Yes, Lord.**

Leader: Victims of war across the world... are they neighbors?

All: **Yes, Lord.**

Leader: One who faces racism... is he my neighbor?

All: **Yes, Lord.**

Leader: Persons with disabilities or elderly... are they my neighbors?

All: **Yes, Lord.**

You remind us: Yes. All of us neighbors.



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Show us how to love, Lord.

May we open our eyes.

May we emerge from our comfortable isolation.

May we build a world of compassion and dignity.

Lord Jesus, who was neighbor to all,

Help us to persevere in love.

Help us to restore dignity to the suffering.

Help us to build a society based not on exclusion, but on community.

Amen.

Sign of the Cross.

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<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/help-us-love-good-samaritan>



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Reading of Sacred Scripture

Luke 10:25-37

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read it?” He said in reply, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” He replied to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.”

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise, a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, ‘Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.’ Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?” He answered, “The one who treated him with mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



Image by falco from Pixabay

Gospel Reflection

Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan to illustrate the meaning of the Greatest Commandment. The first two men, a priest and a Levite were expected to do the right thing even when it was hard. Both men failed. The Samaritan in Christ's story, who was not expected to help the hurt man, illustrates the true essence of **mercy** and reminds us we are to love our neighbors because Christ is in our neighbors. Who do you most relate to in this month's Gospel? Maybe it is none of these characters. Maybe it is the man who asked Jesus the question.

Mercy is an act of kindness, especially to persons who have been unkind to us.

The man who asked the question was testing Jesus. He wanted to know if Jesus truly was from God. Sometimes we ask questions about Jesus and God, especially when we're tired, irritable, jealous, or scared. But no matter how we feel or what is happening, we are called to be like Christ. The Good Samaritan was like Christ. He offered mercy, compassion, patience, and love. When the first two men were tested, they let their comfort, pride, and greed stand in their way of living out their faith, yet the Good Samaritan loved even his enemy. The Good Samaritan was like Christ. Do your actions show others you

are like Christ? How often do we say prayers and go to Mass, yet fail to help persons in need? Do you forgive, pray for, and bless persons who hurt you, like a brother or sister who eats the dessert you wanted? How can you show them mercy through kindness?



Lawrence W. Ladd, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Faith in Action

Jesus calls us to love and serve our neighbor and reminds us through the parable of the Good Samaritan that this means we are to act with charity even when it's not convenient, easy, or comfortable to do so. This can be a challenge! But Jesus is clear that the person in the story we should be like is the one who treated the robber with mercy in his moment of need. Our neighbor is our parent, classmate, sibling, stranger on the bus, or the person we see in the parking lot at the grocery store. Jesus instructed those listening to "go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37). Mercy is more than just a feeling; it needs to lead to action.

Jesus doesn't leave us wondering how to act with mercy and love; he gives us a list in Matthew 25:31-46. It tells his followers that when anyone feeds the hungry, gives drink to the thirsty, welcomes the stranger, clothes the naked, cares for the sick, and visits the imprisoned, they are doing those very things for him. We call these the Works of Mercy.

Our call as disciples of Jesus is to follow his example of sacrificial love through our everyday actions. St. Teresa of Calcutta is attributed with saying, "If you want to change the world, go home and love your family." Living out the works of mercy within your own family is not as complicated as it might seem.

1. Model Mercy

Follow in the footsteps of St. Terese of Lisieux by committing to doing small things with great love for others, starting with persons around you. Bringing a meal to a neighbor who had a baby or is recovering from a surgery (feed the hungry), making homemade cards for elderly family members or someone you know who lives alone (comfort the afflicted), making a few "blessing bags" to keep in your car to give to



Photo by Meruyert Gonullu

someone experiencing homelessness (shelter the homeless), showing grace and forgiveness to someone who has hurt you (forgiving wrongs patiently) are all ways to put mercy into practice.

2. Make a Connection

Adults can help children recognize where there is a need by verbalizing it, along with how you might act to help fill that need.

- ◇ “Grandma is feeling lonely, we can help by visiting her and spending time with her. That will make her feel less lonely.”
- ◇ “Mrs. Walters just had a baby and we can help by cooking dinner for their family. It’s hard to make dinner for your family when you are taking care of a new baby.”
- ◇ “Sometimes people don’t have enough to eat and we can help by sharing what we have with them.”
- ◇ “Your brother hurt your feelings and apologized. He is sorry for what he said and will try not to do it again. When you’re ready, you can tell him you forgive him.”
- ◇ “Dad needs help folding the laundry. Even though it’s a chore I really don’t like to do, I’m going to help him because I love him and our family shares household responsibilities.”



Image by Canva

3. Invite Children to Actively Participate

Choose ways to help others that utilize your child’s unique gifts and talents, demonstrating that everyone has something to contribute. These websites provide ideas:

[From Kids For Kids: Practical Ideas for the Works of Mercy](#)

[10 Ways to practice the works of mercy with young kids](#)

[Works of Mercy for Families \(Part 1: At Home\) | Intentional Catholic Parenting](#)

[Works of Mercy for Families \(Part 2: Beyond Our Front Door\) | Intentional Catholic Parenting](#)

4. Talk about Feelings

With your child, talk about how it feels when you are hurting or need something and someone helps you. Share with them how it makes you feel to help someone in need.

Ask your child, how does it make you feel to help? How can we forgive persons who hurt us? How can we be patient with persons we don't like? Even when that person is your brother or sister?

Adaptation: Use emotion/feelings picture cards that your child can point to as you discuss each situation. "Which picture shows best how you are feeling about this?"

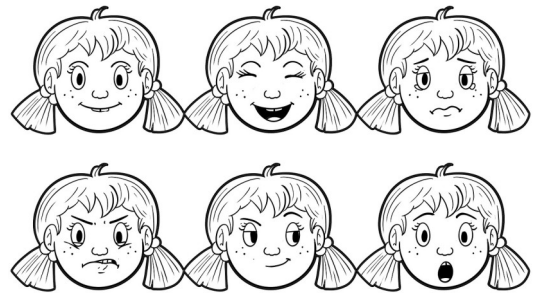


Image from Pixabay

If we spend time thinking about the needs of others, we will find many opportunities to practice works of mercy, first in our homes and in the community. When works of mercy and acts of kindness are modeled in the home they become a regular part of our lives and spiritual practice. We not only create a space where the dignity of others is recognized and acknowledged, but our families will begin to grow in selflessness and empathy, and our very hearts will be transformed to be more like Christ.

Activities with Children

Let's talk: Talk with your child about the parable of the Good Samaritan and its relevancy to their lives. You can use these questions to guide your talk.

- ◇ Who was involved? A Jewish man who was hurt and robbed. Two Jewish men whose jobs were to follow God's law. A man from Samaria. Samaritans and Jewish persons did not get along.
- ◇ What happened? The men whose job it was to follow God's law ignored the man who was hurt. The Samaritan helped the man who was hurt. No one expected the Samaritan to help a Jewish man because the two groups were enemies.
- ◇ Why was this important? When a person needs something, we help them if we can, even if it is a stranger or someone we do not like. It is not enough to know God's law and follow it when it is easy, like the priest and the Levite, we need to follow God's law even when it is hard.



After Eugène Delacroix, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Let's Read and Act: Read the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. Assign roles and act out the parable. Afterwards, discuss:

- ◇ For the priest and the Levite, how did it feel to walk past the hurt man? Did you remember that God wants you to help others?
- ◇ For the hurt man, how did it feel to know that persons passed by and did not stop to help you? When your enemy stopped, were you scared? Or just grateful for the help?

Let's Create: Make helping bags for the homeless. Contact a shelter near you to confirm they will accept a donation and to ask if they have preferences, requirements, or specific needs. Include only new items. Items to consider packing into a lightweight, reusable bag include:

Items for warmth: gloves, hats, socks.

Items for health: wet wipes, hand sanitizer, lotion, lip balm

Items for eating: tuna/cracker packets, canned food with pull tabs, beef jerky, fruit snacks, granola bars

Sensory Bin: Sensory bins can help children with hands-on learning. This month, read the parable of the Good Samaritan and create a sensory bin based on words and objects mentioned in the text. Potential objects include: silver coins, Band-Aids, a toy horse or donkey, a small cup, a toy bed.



Image from Canva

Saint for February

St. Thomas Aquinas

January 28

This month we'll learn about a Doctor of the Church, Thomas Aquinas. He was born in 1225 in Rocca Secca, a town located in central Italy, and was related to royalty. At age five, Thomas went to Monte Cassino to learn from Benedictine monks. He studied hard and spent a lot of time in meditation and prayer. At age fifteen, Thomas left Monte Cassino and started his studies at the University of Naples because the monks knew he was very smart and needed more education than they could give him. At age nineteen, Thomas decided to join the Dominican Friars. Thomas' family did not want him to join the Dominicans and held him prisoner for two years. When his mother realized that Thomas was not going to change his mind, she let him escape.

After taking his vows and becoming a Dominican friar, Thomas went to Paris where he studied under St. Albertus Magnus at the University of Paris. Despite being called a "dumb ox," for his silence and size, St. Thomas earned both his master's and doctorate degrees.

Toward the end of his life, Thomas moved back to Italy where he worked as a professor at the University of Naples. He was summoned by Pope Gregory X to the Second Council of Lyons to help the Latin and Greek churches but died shortly before on March 7, 1274. People say Thomas had a revelation three months prior to his death during Mass. It was so amazing that he never wrote again as he felt his writings were "straw" in comparison to God's glory and wonder.



Carlo Crivelli, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

St. Thomas Aquinas was declared a Doctor of the Church because of the importance of his writing about the Catholic faith. A doctor of the Church is not a medical doctor, but a saint whose writings influenced Catholic doctrine.

What is Catholic doctrine? It is the teachings of the Church that relate to faith and morals. As a theologian and scholar, St. Thomas Aquinas was an excellent teacher. He taught at universities and wrote on many topics including Scripture, morals, happiness, grace, and creation. His most famous works are the Summa Theologia and The Summa Contra Gentiles.

St. Thomas Aquinas believed every person, despite his or her disabilities, has the desire for happiness written on their hearts. This happiness, he believed, could only be found in God. St. Thomas Aquinas suggested that each person not only accept themselves but look at creation to learn more about God. He is famously quoted as saying, “The things that we love tell us what we are.”

Activities related to St. Thomas Aquinas:

- ♦ Take a nature walk and point out cause and effect. For instance, the creek is higher today because of the rain we had last week.
- ♦ Make a habit of talking about finding God in everyday life.
- ♦ Explore God’s creations one sense at a time: touch, smell, sight, taste, and hearing.

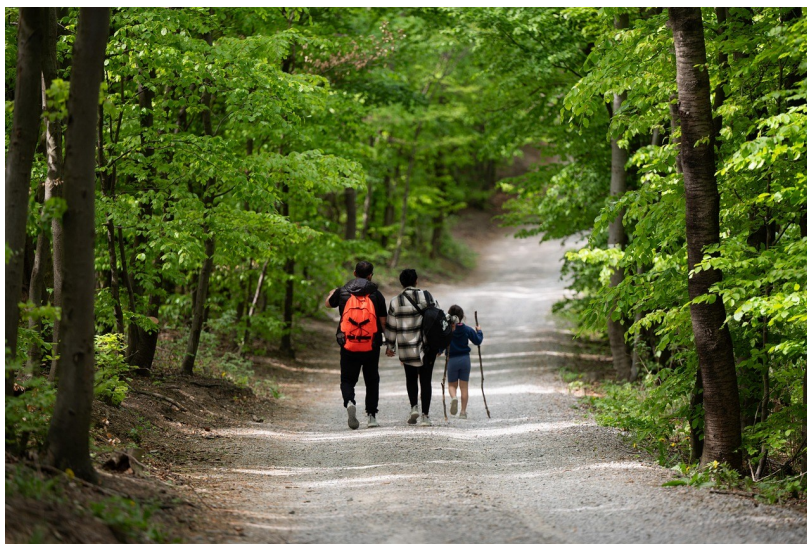


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