

## *Where there is hatred, sow love* **Help bring peace to South Sudan**

### **Introduction**

Inform the children that World Mission Sunday is a special day when Catholics around the world pray for each other and celebrate the fact that we are all children of God.

In today's Gospel, we hear about some religious leaders who were very unhappy with Jesus. They were annoyed that people were beginning to follow Jesus' teaching rather than theirs and worried they would lose their position of importance.

In an attempt to stop Jesus the leaders came up with a crafty plan. They tried to trap Jesus by asking a question that however he answered, he would upset people. Let's listen to the reading now. Pay attention to Jesus' response.

### **The Gospel according to St Matthew 22:15-21**

The leaders wanted to set a trap for Jesus. 'Teacher,' they said, 'we know that you are an honest man and teach the truth. You are not afraid of what other people think about you. Tell us then, is it right to pay tax to Caesar or not?'

But Jesus, aware of their trickery, said 'Show me the coin used for paying tax.' They brought him a coin and he asked them, 'Whose image is on it?' 'Caesar's,' they replied. Then Jesus said to them, 'So give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.' When they heard this they were amazed. They left him and went away.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Let's think about today's Gospel message**

The leaders in the reading were mean. Paying tax to Caesar was the law. If Jesus had suggested that the people didn't need to pay Caesar's tax, he would have ended up in jail.

When somebody does something mean to us it can be tempting to be mean in return. But Jesus teaches us that God never wants us to respond to anyone with unkindness. Like Jesus, we are to do our best to prevent fighting, show respect, and build peace.

**Q**

**What do we need to show one another to make sure our schools, our homes, and our world are peaceful and happy places?**

**A**

Kindness. Friendship. Forgiveness. Patience. We could pray for each other and share what we have so that no one suffers or is sad.

There is a country called South Sudan which is far away in Africa (South Sudan is marked on the world map provided). Sadly in South Sudan, people have been disagreeing and fighting each other for many years.

There are some individuals in South Sudan who have been working very hard to encourage people to follow the words and actions of Jesus.

Jesus didn't lose his temper or become unkind. He stayed calm and showed respect. In other readings Jesus also teaches us about the importance of forgiveness and how we must reach out hands of friendship and peace to all people.

Whenever priests celebrate Mass, including here and in South Sudan, they encourage us to offer a sign of peace.

**Q**

**Can anyone remember what this sign/action is?**

**A**

We shake hands and say the words 'Peace be with you'.

In lots of countries around the world reaching out to shake hands is a way of showing care and holding hands with somebody shows that we are good friends. Both are ways in which we share God's love with others.

On this World Mission Sunday we are being asked to reach out our hands to share God's love with the people of South Sudan. We can do this by praying for the country and its people. There is a famous prayer we could say for the people of South Sudan which tells us how we can all share God's peace with others. One line in the prayer reads 'Lord, let me sow love'.

**Q**

**What do we usually sow?**

**A**

We sow seeds in the ground when we want flowers to grow.

The prayer tells us that if we want people (like the little girl on the poster) to grow happy and healthy we must reach out hands of friendship and care. In this way we sow seeds of God's love in our world.

Optional visual aid: The line 'Let me sow love' is on the 2017 World Mission Sunday poster, as is a picture of a young South Sudanese girl. She has her hands reaching up to the sky. You could refer to the words and the image as you lead into the Liturgy Activity.

**Q**

**How else can we use our hands to share God's love with the world?**

**A**

We can use our hands to very gently soothe a baby; to say prayers for others; to help carry grandparents' shopping; to stroke a dog or cat; to give mum or dad a hug.

I'd like us all to think of at least one way we can reach out and use our hands to sow God's love and peace with the people of South Sudan and across the world.

### **Liturgy Activity – Sowing God's love around the world**

**Notes for catechist** – You will need: pencils/crayons, tape/glue.

A large image of a map/globe (one is provided overleaf to photocopy and enlarge).

Cut out childrens' hand shapes, one for each child.

It is advisable that you use pre-cut hand shapes so children have more time thinking through their actions and decorating their shape. However if this isn't possible ensure you have a sheet of thin card/paper plate for each child on which to draw the outline of their hand and a few pairs of scissors. Ask the children to keep their fingers together and include the wrist. This will make it easier to cut out the shape and attach to the globe.

- On the cut-out shape, invite the children to write their name and one way in which they can use their hands to sow God's love
- Attach the hands to the outside rim of the globe, so that it begins to resemble a flower head
- Time permitting, end the activity by reading out the prayer written on the globe

**Please let your Parish Priest know that this activity symbolises the children's efforts to reach out and sow God's love in South Sudan and across the world. Then, together, we can turn the world into a beautiful place, like a flower in bloom.**

### **Prayer for poster**

Lord, help me share your peace with others.

Let me sow seeds of love.

So all the world might see your beauty

Live with hope,

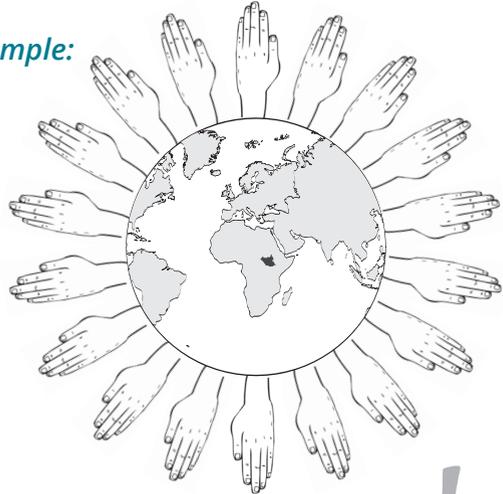
And feel your joy.

Amen.

*Photocopy and enlarge:*



*Example:*



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