### LSW

children

Year C

# Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Images**

Prejudice and religious tolerance

**Points to note**

There are many points in this reading but we should concentrate in this session on just one and I have chosen the last line of the reading. This can be a difficult line in this rather competitive age. Sensitivities should be given to the reality that many children today are placed in a very competitive environment – to be the first in the class; the best at ballet; the fastest swimmer in school.

We will concentrate on the prejudices that children encounter. Be careful: if you assume that children have their own prejudices to tell, that is a prejudice in itself. Then we develop it into their response.

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

If anyone loves me, he will keep my word,

and my Father will love him,

and we shall come to him.

Alleluia!

Gospel

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And with your spirit.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Luke

*All:*  Glory to you O Lord

(Lk 13: 22-30)

Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, “Sir, will there be only a few saved?” He said to them, “Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed.

“Once the master of the house has got up and locked the door, you may find yourself knocking on the door, saying, “Lord, open to us.” But they will answer. “I do not know where you come from.” Then you will find yourself saying, “We once ate and drank in your company; you taught in our streets.” But he will reply, “I do not know where you come from. Away from me, all you wicked men!”

“Then there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves turned outside. And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast of the kingdom of God.

“Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.”

This is the Word of the Lord

**Dialogue**

Do you know what an assumption is? No, we are not talking about the assumption like the Assumption of Our Lady we celebrated. *Explain the meaning of the word. Then explain that people who makes assumptions about others before they meet them are said to have a prejudice.*

Have you ever seen anybody having a prejudice against some one else? *Be careful that we don’t put words into the children’s mouth. Let’s not spoil innocence. Discuss events that the children have encountered. Where the children have been subject to prejudice, be encouraging and supportive. Concentrate on the children’s response rather than the actions of the other person. If a child discusses a prejudice that he or she has, thank the child and be encouraging that he or she has come to that realisation.*

*Explain that long ago, Jews believe that only they can go to heaven. That too was an assumption. That too was a prejudice. Explain that some Jews didn’t bother to behave themselves since they assumed that they will go to heaven anyway. It also meant that they looked down on the efforts of non-Jews who were trying to be good because they believed that no matter how good a non-Jew is, he can’t go to heaven.*

*Discuss how we see the other religions?* Do we still think that way at all? *Explain that the Church teaches that all people can go to heaven and Catholics can go elsewhere if they don’t behave themselves. In that sense, God does not have favourite children.*

*So, what does it mean for us? Explain that this means that we still need to make sure that we behave even though we have already been baptised as a Catholic.*