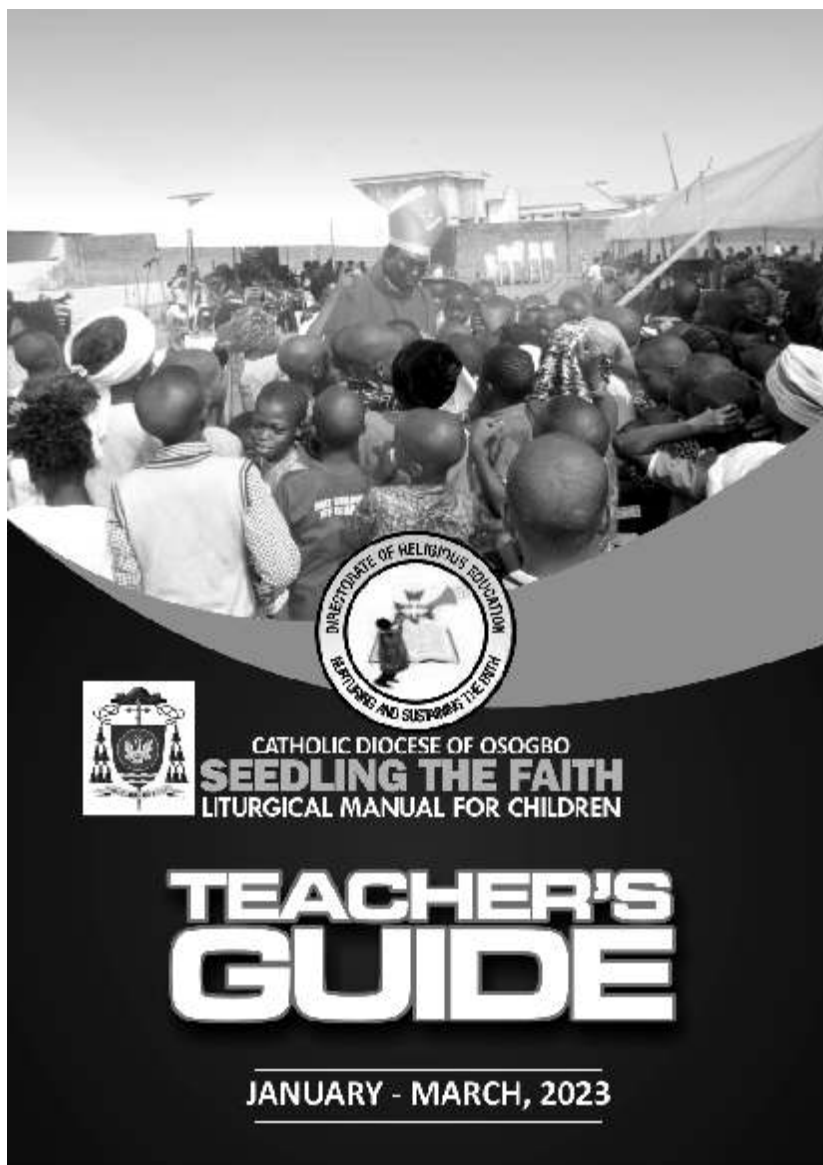


CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OSOGBO
SEEDLING THE FAITH
LITURGICAL MANUAL FOR CHILDREN

TEACHER'S GUIDE

JANUARY - MARCH, 2023

A Publication of
The Directorate of Religious Education
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FOREWORD

“He called a little child to him and placed the child among them. And he said: Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me” (Matthew 18:1-5)”

My beloved children and all animators of the faith for children, Happy New Year 2023 to all of you. It is another year wherein we can learn together a family of God's people among whom children are essential. In this new year, we hope to continue the formation of our children in the way of the Lord, most especially during these times when things are so hard in Nigeria. It is obvious that Jesus loved the little children and he welcomed and recognized their presence in his ministry. Jesus also taught that child-like attitude must be imbibed in order to share in the kingdom of God. However, notwithstanding his charge that we should be childlike, he wants us to form the little ones in the way of the Lord. This is why Jesus exhorts his disciples to always lay good example for the children to follow. Jesus would not want that any older person will in any way be a bad example to the children so that they will not get lost.

This is why we have continued the exercise, **Seedling the faith** to form and properly teach children in the way of the Lord. If children of a nation are well-formed and built in the way of justice and of peace, that nation

will dwell in happiness and peace. It becomes very necessary therefore for us to continue the formation of our nation. Parents, teachers, and guardians should make serious efforts to ensure that children are not led into error. The life of Christ should be imbued in every child right from the home and the church and hopefully the society will continue in the same formation. Because the minds of children are like empty boards, all of us who stand in the position of leaders must make every effort to write good things in their minds. It is whatever we teach them that they will grow up with.

There is a tendency to think that because they are not grown up, children are not useful. The absolute truth is that they are very useful, the Scriptures call them the heritage of the Lord. And in our cultural setup, children actually complete the homes. Think of the chores they help with and the love that they bring to the home. We are happy to have them, and we are always ready to teach them. It is my prayer that God will bless all parents, and indeed the church in our children through Christ our Lord. I therefore present to you this booklet which will guide the faith of our children in the year 2023. Once again, Happy New Year and God bless you all.

Most Rev John Akin Oyejola
Bishop, Catholic Diocese of Osogbo

PREFACE

We welcome all our Children along with their teachers to the fifth year of this regular program in the Diocese. The responses of both parents, teachers and our dear children to this every Sunday program is a strong motivation for us in the Catechetical Department of Osogbo Diocese. We are grateful for your interest and response to all the outlined program for the Children. We continue to upload all the materials of the Directorate into our website: www.osogbodiocesandre.org. We encouraged children animators to visit this website regularly for information, education and interaction including the use of our email address as follows: info@osogbodiocesandre.org or osogbodiocesandre@gmail.com for the benefit of our children. We appreciate those who constantly contact us for their suggestions and contributions. Please let us know from time to time the areas that needs attention on issues of faith that will improve our children and enable us to catch them young.

It has been planned to last for one hour during which the children will be usefully, spiritually and actively engaged; the Bible passage for each Sunday program has been chosen to be the same as the Gospel reading of the Sunday. We urge the teachers to guide the children in understanding the step-by-step study guide.

We are recommending only 10 to 15 children per group for better and effective participation by each child. The program has been designed to run in parallel with the Sunday Mass.

The Bishop and the Catechetical Commission hereby express our appreciation for the efforts of all the teachers of faith in the Diocese, in the workforce of the Directorate and ask the Lord to bless the works of their hands while we also thank all the priests in Osogbo Diocese for their interest and supports.

Sr Dr Immaculata Olu Omojola, SSMA
Director of Religious Education,
Catholic Diocese of Osogbo

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JANUARY
MARY, MOTHER OF GOD (Octave of Christmas)
DATE: 01/01/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **THE MESSAGE OF GOD IS TRUTH**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Luke 2: 16 - 21**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

In a sophisticated school, the students were arrogant and full of pride, they didn't like to be associated with the non-teaching staff. They hardly greet them, especially the cleaners, the students believed they should be at their mercies just because they have wealthy parents and those ones are lowly. So, what's the connection and relationship that should exist between them? The school management has tried to correct this erroneous notion of theirs but they never yielded. 'Lade was different, she was brought up well and believed she was only opportune and God's grace at work that made her come from a wealthy home. Nevertheless, we all are humans, so she didn't showcase the bitterness of discrimination unlike others. To their greatest surprise, one of their compulsory theory questions with the highest mark in Civic Education was; "Mention the name of your class cleaner?" straightforward but brain racking questions, the students were sweating profusely because they had seen her and they could describe her but they didn't and never wanted to know anything about any of them. Out of the whole school, it was only 'Lade that got it Mrs. Basse (Mummy Blessing). This question taught them no one is insignificant in life. We should always be hospitable, show attention and care to others. They never forgot this

lesson in a hurry because it cost them ample amount of mark. They immediately met the cleaners after the examination to apologise, introduce themselves and get their names and from that day, they began to respect and mingle with them.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Never delay in sharing and experiencing the glory of God.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Take note of salient points.
2. Do not hoard the message of God.
3. Be obedient, guided and meditate on God's words.
4. Learn to be humble, accommodating and attentive.
5. Everyone in life is important, no matter their status.

Step 6: Task: Let children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Always show humility and respect to everyone you encounter and share the joyful news about the birth of Jesus.

Step 7: Memory Verse: beside Verse 17," When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child."

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

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EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
DATE: 08/01/2023

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Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **GOD IS OUR GUIDE**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Matthew 2: 1 - 12**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

The custodian of frogs wanted to go out, he then instructs his frogs not to be lured by the pure whitish pot of milk looking captivating to them. They are to stay clear of the milk. But the two frogs turn a blind eye to his order and decide to go and see what it looks like and that was how they fell into the pot of milk. They started kicking frantically, looking for a way out, but the sides of the pot are slippery. Their custodian came back and met them in the pot of milk where they are struggling to come out. They are happy to see him because he will not abandon them but he'll help them out. The custodian advises them on what they are to do and how they are to do it so as to be saved. After several failed attempts, the frogs couldn't come out. But they keep trying and refuse to give up; they keep swimming, kicking, swimming, kicking.... Even though they are getting tired, they keep repeating the whole process, pressing on and following their custodians' guide. After a few hours, they find themselves sitting on sweet, creamy, butter! They've laboriously explored and now free at last.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: God can never be deceived.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. God will always deliver us from evil (plot).
2. Discern wisely and always follow instructions and warnings.
3. The presence of God surely gives us joy.
4. God's glory can manifest where we least expect.
5. Persevere through adversity and remain obedient to God.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Always seek the Lord patiently in prayers and be obedient to His instruction to guide you through word of God, listening to the teachings of His Church and the wisdom of godly people.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 2, "... We saw his star when it came up in the east, and we have come to worship him. "

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

...
SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
DATE: 15/01/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week:
RECOGNIZING GOD

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children:
John 1: 29 - 34

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

A king was to go for medical treatment abroad and customarily, the town shouldn't be left without a traditional head. It's mandatory for him to select someone to stand in for him before his return as he's still childless. He chose his friend to fill in this capacity until his return. It took the king years to come back because he needed to completely heal after his series of surgeries before flying down. His friend was dedicated and diligent and people really enjoyed his reign and loved him very well, such that they were beginning to forget their real king and seeing him as the real king. His friend also enjoyed the honour and privileges associated with royalty during this period. People already believed that as most people usually do

in this kind of instance, he would forget the arrangement and promise and he wouldn't want to leave the position for his friend upon his return because of the luxuries, loveliness him and the long period of time of his friend's absence. Therefore, they were ready to experience the drama that will unfold when the real king comes. But his friend was faithful and sincere, he knew he was just a caretaker, not a king. In fact, he announced the king's return to his people before his arrival and organized a befitting welcome party for him as far back as from the airport. To the surprise of many, he vacated the throne quietly and peacefully for his friend. The king was very delighted towards his friend for being loyal, he also never thought the transition could be this easy.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Do not experience the blessings of God alone, spread the good news to others.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Promote your fellows, that won't stop your own glory.
2. Accept your inability and appreciate the ability in other people.
3. Everyone is endowed with different roles and talent, so don't be jealous of what you don't possess.
4. Be baptized (endorsed) by the Holy Spirit and embrace/accept God's call;
5. Trust and believe in God; He will never leave or forsake us; He already has everything planned and sorted before sending us on errands.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task:

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 29, "...There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day for Him to bless it.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

DATE: 22/01/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **DROP ALL, GOD IS CALLING YOU!**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Matthew 4: 12 - 23**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

The government arrested a vibrant human activist leader who always condemned and opposed the hardship faced by the citizens. While in the prison, he couldn't do much because he was already incapacitated. The government thought they had achieved their aim by silencing him and believed others would run into holes and caves for fear of avoiding same fate as he is. This was not the case, as other members led by the youngest woman amongst them, widely took up the advocacy by going from one place to another to avoid being nabbed. They advised the citizens not to fear the government, rather speak out and speak up, resist oppression and demand for an equitable surplus and a happy society. It's your right not for only their families, say no to a marginalized government at the expense of some people. Musicians, poets, writers, religious leaders and so on were all using their tools; such as songs, poems, literature texts, sermons, etc to pass the message across to the government, such that the government had no hiding place and frankly, how many people will they even arrest? It dawned on the government that they needed to do something positive quickly before the citizens go wild or start revolting and uncontrollable.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Nothing (especially trials) should hinder us from serving God.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. God can use anyone irrespective of status.
2. Obey and trust God.
3. Nothing good comes easily, you have to look and work for it.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Tell your friends and everyone about Jesus and share His love by loving others and become fishers of friends (gathering more followers) for Jesus!

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 17, "... Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of heaven is near."

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

DATE: 29/01/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **THE REWARD OF DOING GOD'S WILL**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Matthew 5: 1 – 12a**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

Teachers are wonderful set of people, especially those at the primary and secondary schools' level. Beyond teaching, they settle disputes, nurse, preach and counsel, visit the sick and bereaved, nurture lives, provide for some basic needs, sometimes house their students etc still management, parents and guardians insult them, it's never easy but they never relent or give up, they keep moving and believing as it's usually said that; "Their rewards are great in heaven." Presently, teachers' rewards have started on earth as ex-students, parents, organizations and governments are rewarding outstanding teachers with gifts, cash, kind, promotions and awards. We all can attest to it and they are things we see and hear every day that some of them have become landlords, car owners, and certificate earners through the rewards they collected for being a teacher. Indeed, teaching is such a noble profession! Be aware that there is nothing good done for humans in God's name that will be disregarded, unnoticed or unrewarded. Know that you are storing up. Therefore, do not relent!

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Supply and nourish spiritually.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. If you know what others don't know, instruct and enlighten them on the subject.
2. As a child of God, get ready for persecution but rejoice God will see you through.
3. Tears may endure at night, but be assured eternal joy comes in the morning.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: The Beatitudes are blessings we receive when we have certain attitudes – Always display each day the attitudes of people who follow Jesus even if it brings some suffering – showing love and kindness to people, giving help to those in need, etc.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 6, "Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; Is God will satisfy them fully!"

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

FEBRUARY
FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
DATE: 05/02/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **RADIATE GOD'S GLORY IN YOUR LIFE**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Matthew 5: 13 - 16**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

In a certain private school, a Mathematics teacher, Mr Chibuzor (popularly called MaziChibz.) was employed and he transformed all the departments in the school positively both academically and spiritually. He made impact and impart in the whole school. Both students and staff felt his presence. He will be the first to resume work, lead devotions with or without other staff members, conduct assemblies, organise Maths clinic for students, remedial classes for weak students, conduct weekly Maths class assessment printed with his money for the students, inter and intra class competition etc. he is diversified to the point of heading literary and debating club when he isn't even an English teacher. Although, he was faced with antagonists believing all is for eye service but God is always by his side. He finds joy sacrificing his time and resources for the betterment of others especially the students. He is never found wanting in any way, his statutory records and everything he needs to do are always on point and on time. He didn't allow naysayers to limit him, he is unmatched and rare. To the glory of God, he has been elevated, he got a sponsor for his PhD and he was recently employed by the government. The whole school is greatly missing this capable hand, MaziChibz for his utility.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Do not underestimate your ability.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Showcase your talent; do not hide it.
2. Be useful and impactful.
3. Stand out in the midst of the crowd

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Always exhibit to people around you, your God-given talents, love and presence and purity to impart on them for better.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 16, “... Your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
DATE: 12/02/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **ACT IN OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Matthew 5: 17 - 37**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

Every organization has its laid down rules and regulations for people to abide with. This is to guide its workers, anyone faulting any of these rules will be dealt with in form of punishment, arrest, suspension or termination of appointment. Rules and regulations are also subjected to revise occasionally in order to add or subtract as the case may be.

In schools, new intakes would be given handbooks and orientation seminar would be organized for them in order to know the dos and don'ts of the institution. Anyone going against these rules will certainly face the music afterwards. Gracie has just been expelled for going against the school rules. She was always tongue lashing, abusing, body shaming, using foul and offensive language and spreading rumours just to cause discord among students and sometimes staff. She had been severally warned and had even gone on suspension. To crown it up, this time around, she was caught engaging in examination malpractice and talking in the exam hall. After due process, the judgment of the disciplinary committee was for her to vacate the school premises immediately for committing such act at even a tender age. She was reminded that “iluti o siofin ese o sini be” (a town without law, that means there is no crime there); therefore, rules and laws are to forestall sins and crimes. Although she has accepted the panel's decision, but she regretted her action, but advising people and vowed to learn to follow instructions and rules so as to be guided aright.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Be a model of virtues.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Guard your tongue.
2. Try and make peace with everyone around you; always seek for forgiveness
3. Run away from every appearance of sin.
4. Change is constant, learn to adapt.
5. Do not swear no matter the condition.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Be eager to learn God's commandments from the Bible and Church teaching and always obey them.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 18, “Remember that as long as heaven and earth last, not the least point nor the smallest detail of the Law will be done away with – not until the end of all things.”

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

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SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

DATE: 19/02/2023

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Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **DENOUNCE SATAN AND HIS PROMISES**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **Matthew 5: 38 - 48**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

Two men in the midst of some other people were personally having a discussion about a vacancy in an organization and the day for the interview. Apart from these two discussants, others never showed interest or joined in the conversation. Unknown to the discussants, one of those present was taking note of every single detail. Leaving that scene, he immediately called the person (the source) those two got the information from and snitched on others using the name of the man who disclosed the vacancy to get address, time and date of interview, requirement and every other thing that would be needed. Undiscovered by the source that he was being played and tricked he disclosed everything to him. Sadly, this cunning man was employed with a huge salary and other benefits. Sooner, the truth was revealed to others, they were extremely pained and angry with him but they believed that's how God wanted it, they left him into His hands and handled it calmly and

maturely. The new organisation requested for recommendation letter from his previous workplace, he was so ashamed and didn't know who to approach as everyone knew what he did already. Nobody was ready to help or associate with him anymore. They believed this was payback time but one of the two discussants let go and typed the recommendation letter for him and helped him collect all his entitlement as well.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: **Strive to do well always and obey the commandments.**

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Be meek.
2. Love everyone equally and do not forget to pray for them.
3. Avoid discrimination, segregation and casting out.
4. Be outstanding and extraordinary; go beyond the ordinary and norms.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Always try to please the Lord by positive responses to your enemies such as sharing favorite toy with friend, inviting someone over that you struggle getting along with, saying something nice to a person who is usually mean to you, and praying for them.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 44, "...: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the children of your Father in heaven."

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

DATE: 26/02/2023

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Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week:**NO ONE IS ABOVE TEMPTATION**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children:**Matthew 4: 1 - 11**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

Once upon a time, some little fishes lived in a quiet pool near a river. Almost all of them were pleasant, friendly and lived and played very happily together. But one fish was different. He was not a big fish, but believed he was the biggest fish in that pool. He was proud of this and refused to be friendly with others. He complained and snapped about everything other fishes do. They told him since he was the 'biggest' fish he should go and join his mates in the river so that they would have peace and he wouldn't need to complain about their childish behaviours. He was already weighing the possibility of going to a higher (next level) water when he remembered they are trying to lure him to be destroyed and eaten by those bigger fishes in the river. He remembered the Yoruba adage "Ejaleja n je sanraniibu" (it is the smaller fish, the bigger fish feed on in the ocean). Thence, he was satisfied living with his pool mates and they lived peacefully and happily. He was subsequently, made the king of fishes and everything was going on unanimously and without hostility.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Weigh your options especially during difficult moments.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Be spiritually prepared so as to overcome temptation, devil and his works.
2. Reject Satan so that God may reign in your heart (for both cannot live together).
3. There is always a cross before the crown, the road is not smooth or easy.
4. In time of trouble, not every solution appears favourable.
5. Be contented, avoid gluttony, greediness and pride/overconfidence.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Read the Bible regularly and fill yourself with the word for wisdom and God's guidance to be able to resist the tempter or people who try to get us to do wrong.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 10, "...Go away, Satan! The Scripture says, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!'"

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

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MARCH
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
DATE: 05/03/2023

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Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week:**BEING WITH GOD IS PEACEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children:**Matthew 17: 1 – 9**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

The feelings one experiences when going for any spiritual exercise such as the Holy pilgrimage, vigils, masses, confessions can't be described. Worries, anxiety, sorrows will be forgotten and one will feel the peace and tranquility of God as long as one is at His presence. More significantly, is when you intercede for others at the altar so they could share in the blessings of God.

Janna went for a three-day revival programme in the church. She changed her regular Sunday seat and didn't sit with any of her friends because she wanted to concentrate and avoid disturbances. She was fully prepared for this spiritual exercise. On the last day they were to pray as the spirit leads. She channeled her prayers for her friends and families especially the sick and unconverted. She fervently prayed for them committing them and their needs unto God. She was so engrossed that she forgot her personal intention, although she had submitted her petitions on the first day of the revival. The Eucharist was exposed and she called on Mary mother of God, the angels and the saints to mediate on her behalf. She was just at peace with herself at that moment forgetting her own distress. As popularly said; "When you point a finger at someone, the other fingers are pointing back at you." Janna's prayers which she didn't even open her mouth to request were answered, all her troubles vanished within months of the revival. The prayer she made for her friends and families were also granted. For standing in gap for others, she and her people received their blessings.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Assuredly, our lives change positively and radiate when we are for God.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Think of what will benefit others too, avoid selfishness.
2. Avoid distraction when communicating with God.
3. Spirit of God instructs and guides his own.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Try to be always in God's presence in order to share in His peace and be at peace with yourself by doing good and pursuing righteousness, talking the truth, loving God and loving people, caring for their needs, protecting them with your words, guarding your words about others, seeing people like God sees them, etc.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 5, "... This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased – listen to him!"

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

DATE: 12/03/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **DO NOT HIDE THE 'HURTING FINGER' UNDER THE CLOTHES**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **John 4:5 - 42**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

There was once a slave who was treated cruelly by his master. One day, he couldn't take it anymore and ran away to the forest to escape. There he chanced upon a lion that couldn't walk because of the thorn in its paw. The lion beckoned and pleaded to the slave to be rescued although, the slave was scared, he mustered his courage and took out the thorn in the lion's paw. When the lion was finally free of the thorn, he ran deep into the forest and didn't harm the slave. Sometime later, the slave was caught by his master along with some animals in the forest. The master then ordered the slave to be thrown into the lion's den, saying lions and humans are foes and for sure the lion will devour the slave in this circumstance. Hearing this pronouncement, the slave was disturbed and kept praying for miracle that will save him. He was thrown in the lion's den and when the lion saw the slave, it recognized him as the same person that once helped it. This was how the slave was able to escape the den unharmed and freed all the other animals.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: Do not inherit enemies, be accommodating and attentive to all.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Have faith in God, so that it can speak and work for you.
2. Make requests, ask questions; do not be silent (you never know

- when and who will help or has solution to the problem).
3. Nothing is hidden to God.
 4. Truth and faith are essential ingredients of faith in order to get result.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Do good always and don't look down on or despise people or discriminate but instead offer help to them knowing that God remembers and rewards good deeds.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 10, *“If only you knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water.”*

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

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JOSEPH HUSBAND OF MARY
DATE: 19/03/2023

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Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **CHANGE YOUR APPROACH; AVOID RIGIDITY**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children: **John 9: 1 - 41**

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

A tutor has been teaching students for a period of time but they kept failing. He was worried and displeased. He kept praying to God for a positive

turnaround. His colleagues pitied him and encouraged him not to go weary seeing all his hard work on his students. He believed these students could do it and make it. One of his colleagues approached him to change his teaching methodology as he had been using same now without getting any result from the student. This co-worker introduced a new way to him which he adopted, went extra miles as well by fixing extra classes even on weekends, motivated the students and prayed along. Although, it wasn't an easy journey as he and his students regularly held classes persistently without quitting. The next result was superb, mind-blowing and excellent as the kids performed brilliantly well. Some of his workmates were happy for this distinct pacesetting achievement while some grudgingly congratulated him and spread gossips about him cutting corners for his students so they can for once pass. Since they knew what they put into this landmark of theirs, the teacher and students were unbothered by naysayers.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: God is never wicked; His ways are not ours.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Adhering to instruction strictly paves way for success.
2. God is the only one that can change our story to glory.
3. Know that not everyone will be happy with your victory and success.
4. God is not man, therefore, believe and have faith in Him, do not give up.
5. Be consistent and courageous, do not be intimidated in the face of adversary.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Trust God and never not trust Him to help you always believe Him at all costs that He can do anything for you.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 5, *“While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”*

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
DATE: 26/03/2023

Opening Prayer: Let the teacher invite one of the children for the opening prayer.

Songs of Praise: The teacher ought to have planned for a hymn or choruses that fit the liturgy of the day.

Introduction: The teacher revises last week's discussion. Last memory verse will be repeated three times.

Step 1: The facilitator introduces the theme for the week: **GOD IS ALWAYS TIMELY**

Step 2: The Gospel reading of the Sunday will be read by two children:
John 11: 1 – 45

Step 3: Sharing: Let children mention what they heard in the reading one after the other.

Step 4: Teaching: The facilitator will tell this story to enlighten children about the message of the Gospel of the day.

A baby of 9 months was trained to give and not hoard. One day, it happens that a neighbour of theirs who happened to be a granny saw this baby eating her favourite biscuit. Jokingly, she requested for the biscuit from the baby by stretching out her hand so she could give her. Amazingly, unlike many babies of her age she let go of the biscuit pack willingly and cheerfully. Granny took one and ate it thinking she would cry but she was disappointed because the baby didn't even show any displeasure, she just went ahead with her normal play. Granny was astonished by this little girl's charity, confidence and trust for her to believe in her that she wouldn't eat more than necessary, she then returned the remaining biscuit to the baby. Granny reciprocated the baby's gesture by buying her cartons of expensive cookies, wafers, yoghurts and many more. They were many that they decided to keep some for her first birthday celebration. By letting go of just a pack of biscuit, she got the biscuit back in folds.

Step 5: Lesson Learnt: The presence of God frees us from every shackle.

Let three children identify some lessons from the message

1. Seek God always especially in trying periods.
2. Trust and have faith in God because there is nothing impossible for Him.

3. Miracles can manifest only through the help of God.
4. If you surrender freely, a great reward will follow.

Step 6: Task: Let the children agree on a relevant and practicable task.

Suggested Task: Always take your problems to God seeking him by faith and trusting Him that there is nothing He cannot do even when the solution is not physically manifesting at your time.

Step 7: Memory Verse: Verse 5, “*While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*”

Step 8: Sunday Offering: Let the teacher collect the Sunday offering to be taken to the church during the offertory.

Step 9: Concluding prayer: The session must be concluded with a prayer to be led by one of the children asking the child to use the topic of the day.

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**Sr Dr Omojola I.O, SSMA
DRE, Osogbo Diocese**

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