

# Chapter 5 Eucharist

## Chapter 5

### Background Focus for Parents

The Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1–20) presents one of those uncomfortable challenges that Jesus often issues. It is a message that, perhaps, brings forth the difference between hearing and listening. Hearing the Good News is easy. It simply involves paying attention to the words that are being said. It may even involve agreement with what is being said. Listening, on the other hand, seems to imply something deeper. It includes not only the act of hearing, but also some real sense of reflection and integration into one's life. This chapter focuses on the importance of listening to God's Word and taking care that our hearts are "good soil" in which it can be rooted. As we listen to God's Word at Mass, it is good for all of us to challenge ourselves to see if we are just hearing the readings or if we are really listening.

### Opening Prayer

- Invite your child to pray with you by starting with the Sign of the Cross, then saying, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence. Pray: God in the Bible you teach us about your love for us and how to grow as followers of Jesus. Help us to always listen to the words of the Bible so we may grow in faith. Amen. Close with another Sign of the Cross.

### Activity

- Create two columns on a piece of paper, and label one "Listening" and the other "Not Listening."
- Ask your child to share how they know when someone is really listening to them. Encourage them to think of the words or actions of someone who is listening (eye contact, nodding head, asking questions, etc.). Write their responses on the paper under "Listening."
- Invite your child to share the words or actions of someone who is not listening to them (moving around, not looking at them, talking while they are talking, etc.). Write these responses under the correct column.
- Tell your child that in today's lesson they will learn about the importance of listening and how we listen to and learn from the words of the Bible during Mass.

## Featured Story

- Invite your child to open their Bible and to find Mark 4:16–20 and tell your child that this story is often called the Parable of the Sower. Explain that parables are stories that Jesus told to teach important lessons.
- Read the story and help with the new vocabulary.
- Ask them several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:
  - What happens to the seeds that fall on rocky ground? (they give up)
  - What happens to the seeds that are planted among the thorn bushes? (they don't bear fruit)
  - What happens to the seeds planted in good soil? (they bear fruit)
- Explain that the seeds and the different kinds of soil in the story stand for something else—Jesus is not really talking about seeds and soil. Invite them to share what they think seeds and soil might represent. If your child doesn't guess correctly, tell them they will find out in the reading.
- Read to them: Jesus often told stories to teach us lessons. In this Bible passage from Mark, Jesus tells us a story about growing plants. He wants to teach us to listen to God's Word and then act on it. In his story, seeds stand for God's Word. Soil stands for our hearts. Seeds in rocky soil may grow at first, but soon they will die. Just like in some hearts, God's Word doesn't sink deep. When doing what God wants is difficult, these people give up. In some hearts, God's Word does not have room to grow. This is like seeds planted in thorns. But in some hearts, God's Word grows strong, like seeds planted in rich soil. These people bring much good to the world. What is your heart like? How do you make sure God's Word grows in you?
- Ask the following questions to check for comprehension:
  - What do the seeds stand for? (God's Word)
  - What do the different kinds of soil stand for? (our hearts)
  - What kind of soil do we want our hearts to be? (good soil)
- Invite your child to share what they think God's Word is. Explain to them that this is a name for the readings and teachings in the Bible. The Bible is also called Sacred Scripture.

## Activity

- Draw a garden with healthy plants growing in it. Think of some good acts you can do. Beside each healthy plant, draw a picture of one of these acts. Put your drawing in a place where you will see it daily. Remember to do a good act every day as God's Word grows in your heart.

### **God's Treasure of the Eucharist**

- Remind your child of the four main parts of the Mass, or ask if they can recall them. (Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Concluding Rites)
- Write each of these on a piece of paper.
- Explain that the Liturgy of the Word is the part of the Mass where we hear God's Word in the Bible. Tell them that Sacred Scripture is a guide for our lives and that we look to them for guidance about how to be faithful to God as a follower of Jesus.
- Review some basics about the Bible, such as how it is made up of the Old and New Testaments and that the New Testament includes the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John— as well as letters written to the early Church by some of Jesus' first followers.
- Tell your child that we hear several different Bible readings during the Liturgy of the Word. Write the name of each on the paper and explain in these or similar words:
  - First Reading: This is usually from the Old Testament and reminds us of God's love for us.
  - Responsorial Psalm: This is a reading or song of a psalm from the Old Testament.
  - Second Reading: This is a reading from one of the New Testament letters that were written to the early Church.
  - Gospel Reading: This New Testament reading tells us about Jesus and his teachings.
- Explain to your child that there are a lot of words in the different readings in the Liturgy of the Word and that they might not be able to understand all of them. Assure them that this is okay, but that they should listen anyway. Tell them that they will understand more as they grow and learn.
- Help your child understand that after the readings, the priest or deacon speaks to help us understand God's Word and how to follow it.

### **Lesson Wrap-Up**

- Invite your child to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and invite them to share some of the key things they learned.
- Ensure that the following points are made:
  - God's Word is another name for the readings and teachings in the Bible.
  - It is important to prepare our hearts for God's Word.
  - We hear God's Word at Mass in the Liturgy of the Word Closing Prayer