

Jesus gives us peace

Boys and girls, did you hear what today’s readings from the Bible said for us to do? They said that we should be holy and the Gospel I just read said we should be perfect!!!

Let me see a show of hands ... how many of you out there are holy?
OK, now, how many of you are perfect?

[Answers from children]

Are you sure?

[Answers from children]

It’s hard, isn’t it?

How many of you have had your parents tell you that you’re holy?

[Answers from children]

But we are! We’re holy when we lead Christian lives. But that’s hard to do, too, isn’t it?

To be holy and perfect is a very hard thing to do.

To be perfect we would have to be without sin ... and the only sinless person we know is Jesus Himself!

So how can He tell us to be perfect?

Let me tell you a little story:

There was a little boy named “Nick” who lived right across the street from another little boy named “David.” The boys went to the same school, liked the same food, played the same games, rode their bikes together in the summer and even built snowmen together in the winter.

They were best friends!!!

But now they’re not even speaking to each other.

Why not?

It seems that one day they were playing catch when Nick accidentally threw David’s baseball into a neighbor’s yard where the neighbor’s German Shepherd dog caught the ball and chewed it up! David blamed Nick for the loss of his favorite baseball. He was so mad at Nick that he said he never wanted to play ... or even talk ... with Nick again.

Now Nick is sad all the time.

And so is David!

What went wrong?

[Answers from children]

That’s right. It was an accident but now both boys are unhappy.

What could David do to get back together with Nick?

[Answers from children]

Sure! All David has to do is tell Nick that he’s sorry and David can have his best friend back in his life.

Many of us have done something wrong and then feel really bad about it. Like when we’re trying to live Christian lives but fail!!!

We’re sad because we didn’t do what God wanted us to do. God wants us to be holy and to love each other, just like Jesus told us, even if that other person is your enemy!

That’s right. We’re supposed to love our enemies. That’s really, really hard to do, isn’t it?

Just like with Nick and David, we sometimes can’t even love our friends.

But Jesus loves us and he forgave His enemies, even those that nailed him to a cross. And he forgave His friends, too, like he forgave Peter for telling people that he didn’t know Jesus.

And when we do something wrong ... something we’re sorry for ... we are very far from perfect aren’t we?

It’s really a good thing that Jesus gave us something to make us whole again, something to help us be perfect ... just like He told us to be.

Boys and Girls, we are friends with Jesus in a very special way.

What is the sacrament that Jesus gave us so that we can share in His life?

[Answers from children]

That’s right!!! The Eucharist.

But we are sometimes not ready to receive the Eucharist.

Can you tell me why that is?

[Answers from children]

The good part here is that Jesus gave us another sacrament to help us get ready to receive the Eucharist ... and to help us become holy and perfect!!!

Do you know what’s it’s called?

[Answers from children]

That’s right, it’s sometimes called confession ... or penance ... but it’s officially called the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

As you second graders prepare for your first communion, you will soon receive first reconciliation, too.

Reconciliation helps us because it’s Jesus’s way of preparing us ... getting us ready ... and healing us ... repairing the damage to our friendship with God that was caused by sin.

All we have to do is ask for forgiveness and He gives it ... and He gives us His peace in knowing that however we may have failed to do everything we’re supposed to do, when we have sinned, we can be forgiven ... over and over again!

Get ready for this amazing experience!!!

Are you ready?

[Answers from children]

That’s wonderful! God knows that we can’t be good all the time ... that we sin ... that we fail when we try to be holy and perfect.

That’s why God the Father sent Jesus ... and that’s why Jesus gave us this sacrament of healing.

Just like Nick and David, He’s just waiting for us to say “I’m sorry!”

END

Based on Lv 19:1-2, 17-18 & Mt 5:38-48