

Third Sunday of Lent

God gives us another chance

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes when we are ready to give up, we decide to give something one more chance and then find that we finally succeed! God is always ready to give us another chance, even when we get things wrong time and time again.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Say together:

May the light of God's love shine in our lives
for everyone to see.

SORRY

God is always ready to forgive us, even when we turn away. Listen to this story:

Zacchaeus was a tax collector who cheated people out of their money. No one liked him and he had no friends, but Jesus was ready to forgive Zacchaeus and to offer him friendship. Zacchaeus had a change of heart and was sorry for his dishonesty and selfishness. He promised Jesus he would change his ways and try hard to be kind and loving to everyone. (Luke 19:1-10)

Close your eyes, and ask Jesus to help you to change your ways and make a fresh start. Then sing Sorry Song 4 together.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 5.

GOSPEL (LUKE 13:6-9)

One day Jesus told the people this parable: "A man went to check how much fruit was growing on a tree in his orchard, but he found that there was none. So he sent for his gardener and told him, 'This tree has grown no fruit for the last three years. Cut it down and plant another tree in its place!'"

"But the gardener said to him, 'Master, give the tree one more year, so I can feed and care for it. Then if it still has no fruit on it, cut it down.'"

DISCUSSION

The master of a house wanted to cut one of his trees down because it had grown no fruit for three years, and he wanted to plant another tree in its place. But the gardener asked his master to give the tree one more chance to prove itself.

What was the gardener willing to do to help the tree to produce some fruit? The gardener would feed the tree with manure and make sure it was well watered and cared for. The gardener was ready to do whatever he could to help the tree to grow some fruit and to save it from being destroyed.

What do you think the message of today's parable is? God is always ready to give us another chance to change and to grow the fruits of his love. Just as the gardener was ready to care for the tree and help it to grow fruit, so Jesus will help us to be kind, loving, generous, and forgiving, and able to bear the fruits of God's life and love in us.

ACTIVITY

Make copies of the activity sheet for each child, and ask the children to draw a picture in the space provided.

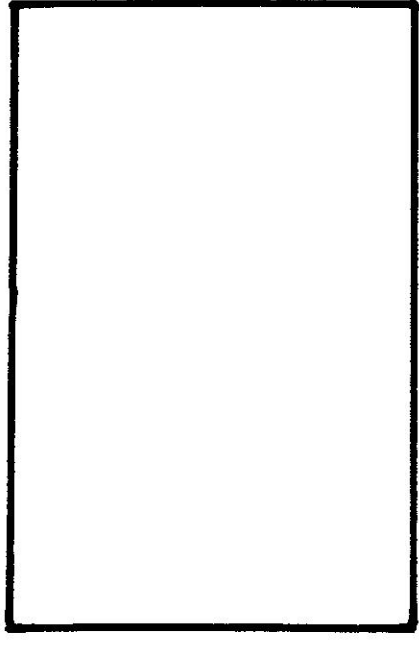
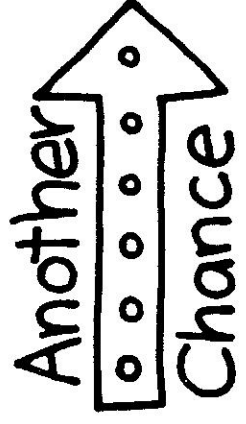
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CLOSING PRAYER

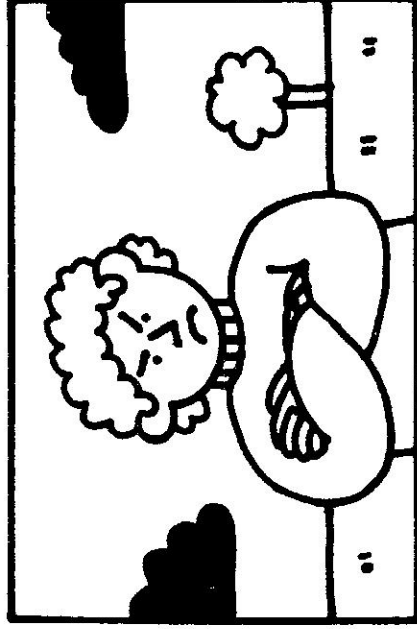
Lord, take my hand and show me the way.
Help me to get up when I fall
and to try again,
knowing that you will always
give me another chance.



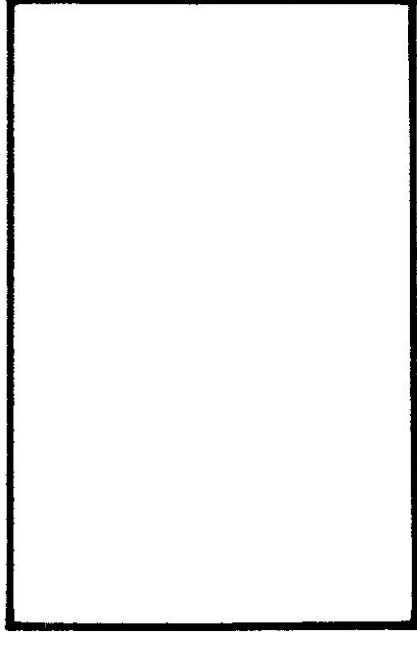
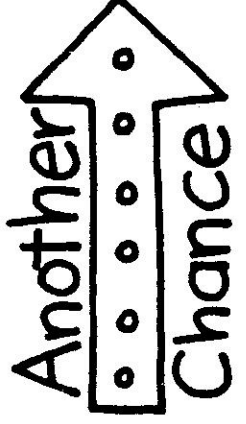
Diseased tree with no fruit.



Healthy tree, lots of fruit.



A selfish and unkind person.



A kind and loving person.