

Twenty-Ninth Sunday of the Year

A place in heaven

INTRODUCTION

James and John went to Jesus to ask an important favor. They wanted Jesus to promise them a special place beside him in the kingdom of heaven. Listen carefully to today's Gospel to hear whether or not Jesus granted their wish.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles we listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

The world was full of darkness and shadows, but now it is filled with light so everyone can see. God sent his only son to fill our world with peace and love. (Isaiah 9:1-2, 6)

SORRY

Listen to this reading:

Lord, you will show me the path
that leads to everlasting life.
And as you walk beside me on my journey,
I will be filled with the happiness
that lasts forever.

(Psalm 16:11)

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 4.

GOSPEL (MARK 10:35-45)

The two disciples, James and John, came to Jesus and asked him, "Master, can we sit on either side of your throne in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus answered, "Only my heavenly father can decide this." When the other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were angry and began to argue with them.

Jesus said to them, "You must not quarrel with each other about which of you is the greatest! I have come as a servant and not as a king! Whoever thinks of others before themselves will be reward-

ed for their goodness, and they will have a place with me in the kingdom of heaven."

DISCUSSION

James and John wanted Jesus to promise them a special place in heaven with him. This caused the disciples to argue about which one of them was the greatest and deserved to have the best place.

Jesus reminded them that it is God the Father who will decide who deserves a place in heaven. He will measure our greatness by our goodness and willingness to think of others before ourselves.

Jesus did not come as a king but as a servant of all humankind. He put our needs first and died on the cross to save us from sin. Can you think of anyone who puts the needs of others before their own? (Encourage the children to make their own suggestions, e.g., parents, teachers, and nurses.)

Mother Teresa is a nun who truly puts the words of Jesus into action. Like him, she has made herself a servant of the people, and puts the needs of the poor and dying people in India first. She does all of this out of love for Jesus, and she expects no thanks or reward. Her goodness will make her truly great in the sight of God.

If we remember the words of Jesus, "Whatever you do to others, you do to me," then we should always remember to treat other people with love and kindness, and to think of them before ourselves. By being unselfish and generous with our love, we will be assured of a place with Jesus in heaven.

ACTIVITY

Copy the picture of God sitting on a heavenly throne, with a crowd of people in the foreground. Talk about why only God will decide who shall be welcomed into the kingdom of heaven.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, teach us to be loving and caring
and to think of other people
before thinking of ourselves.

