



3 March 2019, 8 a.m. | 8th Sunday Year C | Bible Sunday
Children's Mass

Sirach 27:4-7 | Psalm 92:2-3, 13-16 | 1 Corinthians 15:54-58 |
Luke 6:39-45

CHANGE BEGINS WITH OURSELVES

Introduction

Dear sisters and brothers, dear children, today we celebrate Bible Sunday. It is a reminder to all of us to come to God's word and be nourished by it. When we come for Mass, we receive nourishment from two tables: one is the table of the Eucharist, where Jesus becomes present to us, and we receive him in our bodies and hearts, and the other is the table from which the word of God is proclaimed. This is also a table from where we receive nourishment, making us strong to live our lives in God's presence and following his will.

So dear children, let us pray that we might all grow in our love for God's word, and that we might love the Bible, read it, apply it to our lives and pray over it.

Liturgy of the Word

Father, we come to receive your word at the table you set for us. You are now going to speak to us through the Bible. We ask you, heavenly Father, to open our minds and hearts, so that we might welcome your word, listen to it and apply it to our lives. We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Before the Gospel

We have been listening to God's word in the two readings, and now we have a reading from the gospel, which speaks to us, in a very special way, the message of Jesus Christ. As we celebrate Bible Sunday, let us pray that each one of us may truly welcome God's word, and as a sign of welcome, I would like you children to open your hands, palms facing upward, and listen attentively to the gospel.

Homily

My dear children, what did you see in this little skit presented to us by the fifth standard students? The children went for a picnic and took a little picnic basket with them. What do we usually do with the snack wrappings after we have eaten? Do we put them back into our bag? No – we throw them in and around the park and dirty the place. And when we visit the park the next time, we complain that the place is dirty, and that the caretaker should clean it. We saw that the children applied today's gospel to themselves and said that we are all responsible for change, and they picked up their garbage themselves.

Let change not start with somebody else. Let us all begin to change ourselves first. The gospel says that this is like a person who has a big block in their eyes, but is looking at a little defect in their neighbour. Jesus says that we must first begin to see correctly and then tell others to see better. So, change must come from ourselves.

If you go to some of the beaches in our city, like Juhu, Versova and Chimbai, there are groups of citizens who take the initiative to clean up these areas. They do not say that it is the responsibility of the municipality

or the city cleaners to clean up the garbage left by visitors. They take this responsibility upon themselves, saying that change begins with us. If we want to see a cleaner Mumbai, we must become cleaner in our habits. Before we point a finger at others, let us examine our own ways. All of us have gone wrong in some way or the other. Let us begin to change the world, starting with ourselves. When we begin with ourselves, then we can live in a better world.

This inspiration, this message, has come from the gospel. It means that, as we celebrate Bible Sunday, we must listen to God's word and apply it to ourselves. Very often, we apply it to our neighbour or a family member, to the authorities or a member of the church. Let us begin to apply God's word to ourselves first, so that the change we want to see in others begins within us, Amen.



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