

ST MARY'S JUNIOR CHURCH AT HOME

Resources for use at home with Children & Young People
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MATTHEW 18:15-20

Readings can be downloaded at stmaryswistaston.blog

A gathering prayer

Dear Lord Jesus,
we don't have to see you
to know you are with us.
You bring us all together,
as a community, in your love.
Thank you, Jesus. **Amen.**



A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

Give each person a card with their
name attached to a building block.
Work together to build a steady
tower.

Lord God, we thank you that we are
all members of your family.
Thank you that together we can
build a strong community.
We can make a difference in our
world. **Amen.**

For younger children - for High School and above see over

Jesus teaches us how to deal with someone who upsets us.

Imagine,' said Jesus, with his disciples gathered about him, 'that somebody in the church has done something to upset you.'

The disciples had just been asking about who was the most important in the church, and Jesus had shocked them by saying it was the children. Now he was teaching them about relationships.

Jesus continued, 'Speak to the person alone and tell them what they've done wrong. If they listen, you'll have solved the problem and got a brother or sister back.'

'What if they don't listen?' the disciples asked.

'Take along one or two other people, who can hear what you say to one another,' Jesus replied. 'If the person still won't listen, then tell the whole church what has happened. If they won't even listen to the church, then that person is not like a brother or sister to you.

They are like a Gentile or a tax collector, and you shouldn't treat them as family.' Jesus told the disciples that they would be the ones making judgements in the church. 'You are in charge of deciding what is forbidden and what is allowed now. Whatever you forbid on earth, will also be forbidden in heaven. Whatever you allow on earth, will be allowed in heaven. And remember, if two of you agree when you ask for something on earth, my Father in heaven will give it to you.' Looking at the group listening to him, Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

Glossary: Gentile the name that Jews give to non-Jews; tax collector tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Romans, collecting money from their own people. This meant they were seen as traitors.

Talk together (Connecting faith with everyday life)

Why do you think Jesus tells us that the whole church should be involved if two people can't sort a problem out?

Have you ever fallen out with a friend? What did you do about it?

What things can we do to help everyone get along with one another?

For High School Children & Above

Good advice

Give each young person a copy of the passage and a highlighter pen. Ask them to read the passage and highlight anything Jesus says that they believe is good advice.

Share the pieces of good advice with one another. Ask: why does this seem good? Does everyone agree?

Questions to discuss

Why would Jesus need to talk about how to deal with someone who does wrong within the church community?

Why might Jesus believe it is best to 'have it out' with someone rather than ignoring the problem?

What do you think it means when Jesus says that he will be there when two or three gather in his name?

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Talk together (Connecting faith with everyday life)

Why do you think Jesus tells us that the whole church should be involved if two people can't sort a problem out?

Have you ever fallen out with a friend? What did you do about it?

What things can we do to help everyone get along with one another?

Take a look at the relevant Sheet for you Age - read and complete it

Closing Prayer

Dear God,
the place where we live,
where we learn to listen to you
and to each other
and act on what we hear.
Be with us, Lord. **Amen.**



Name.....



Matthew 18.15-20

Jesus teaches us how to deal with someone who upsets us.



Family time

Talk Why is it best to deal with issues rather than 'sweep them under the carpet'?

Do Watch *Toy Story* [PG] and think about the way Woody confronts Buzz with the things he is not happy about.

Pray Thank you, God, for all the people in our lives. Sorry for the times we upset one another. If something is wrong, help us not to bottle it up, but to deal with it and put things right.

Amen.

Activity time



Join the dots to discover who has promised to be with us, even if just two or three are gathered.



Help this boy to find his friend so they can talk and 'make up'.



Write a diary entry about a time you made up with a friend you'd fallen out with.



Held together

Notes on the Bible readings

- Today's passage is part of a section of Matthew's Gospel focusing on life in the church. However, 'church' as we understand it did not exist at the time Matthew was writing. So 'church' means a gathering or an assembly of Christians.
- Jesus teaches about how to handle broken relationships within the community. He presents a plan for mending these relationships. If we feel someone has wronged us, we must tell them and deal with it face to face. If need be, take one or two others we trust along with us, and if that doesn't work, we should take our differences to the whole church community to sort out. But always remember that, whatever the size of the gathering, Jesus will be present.
- How might this passage speak to the communities we find ourselves in today? What tensions and difficulties arise? And how do we deal with them in a way that builds up the community?

Make a community tree

Bind together some small branches or twigs to make a bare tree, and prepare some paper leaves.

Take as many leaves as you like, and write on each leaf one quality that helps to build a healthy community. Hang the leaves on the tree, and use it as a prompt to prayer.

Questions for reflection

- ▶ How well does this ordered pattern represent your community?
- ▶ What holds your community together?
- ▶ If your community was a hive, who are the bees? The drones? Where do you go for nectar?



A prayer of approach

O Lord our God, we sometimes tremble as we think of who we are and who you are. Bring us now, in this moment, to know you. See us as we are, and see our yearning to be more like you. May we lay aside anything that hinders our journey with you, and with our friends and neighbours. Amen.

A prayer for others

Eternal God, we pray for those who this day need our prayers: those we see around us... family and friends near and far... strangers and communities we will never meet or know, but whose peril we see on our screens... those whose life is ebbing away... those who grieve deeply for lives and loves lost... those who are forgotten, unnoticed, unloved, unmissed... Lord God, in your abundance of mercy, hear these and all our prayers. Amen.

A personal prayer

Sometimes, O God, I wish I was on my own, not troubled and disturbed by those around me, not jostled and tussled this way and that, but just left to my own devices. But I am not just me, I am part of the community in which I live. Give me patience with those around me, give me love and compassion for those in need, give me understanding of people who are so different from me and give me, above all else, a yearning to do your will. Amen.

Live your faith

Write a letter to your MP about an issue that stirs your feelings, or join a campaigning group for such an issue (e.g. Avaaz or 38 degrees).