

# Opening Prayer Service

## Gather

Jesus, we learn from the Gospels that you were, and still are, a great teacher to us all. We are grateful to the early Christians who talked about you and spread the Good News of your life to others. And we are grateful to those who wrote down the things you said and the stories told about you. Guide our learning today as we explore the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and how they were developed. Amen.

## Listen and Look

Presentation of the children's gospel story "Jesus the Great Teacher"

*The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ*

**Response:** *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Pause for silent reflection.

## Respond

We pray in thanksgiving for life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who is our salvation.

**Response:** *We thank you, O God.*

We pray in thanksgiving for the great teachings of Jesus as found in his sayings, stories, and parables.

**Response:** *We thank you, O God.*

We pray in thanksgiving for the message of the gospels and how that message speaks to us as children, teens, and adults.

**Response:** *We thank you, O God.*

## Go Forth

O God, through your son Jesus we have been given full life. We rejoice in our gratitude to Jesus for giving his life so that we might fully live. Help us to listen to and learn from the Gospels today. Amen.

# Synoptic Match

*Complete this activity and bring it in signed by all family members, on Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> for a Jesus Dollar!*

Matthew, Mark, and Luke present the basic story of Jesus in similar ways, including the order of the material, the stories told, the sayings of Jesus, even using many of the same words in parallel accounts. They have many parables and accounts in common, as well as a general consensus on the order of events, suggesting a common source for all three.

Engage yourself with the Synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke – by doing the following matching activity. Look up the Scripture passages below and place each in the row that matches with the story or parable. The first one is completed for you as an example.

| <u>Matthew</u> | <u>Mark</u> | <u>Luke</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 19:16-30       | 12:28-34    | 6:13-16     |
| 17:1-8         | 1:9-11      | 5:18-25     |
| 4:12-17        | 4:1-9       | 4:14-15     |
| 9:1-8          | 1:12-13     | 11:25-28    |
| 12:1-8         | 3:13-19     | 6:1-5       |
| 22:34-40       | 1:14-15     | 8:6-8       |
| 3:13-17        | 2:1-12      | 4:1-13      |
| 10:1-4         | 9:2-8       | 9:28-36     |
| 4:1-11         | 10:17-22    | 3:21-22     |
| 13:1-9         | 2:23-28     | 18:18-23    |

|                              | <u>Matthew</u> | <u>Mark</u> | <u>Luke</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Baptism of Jesus             | 3:13-17        | 1:9-11      | 3:21-22     |
| Temptation of Jesus          |                |             |             |
| Jesus begins his ministry    |                |             |             |
| Healing a paralytic          |                |             |             |
| Picking grain on the Sabbath |                |             |             |
| Mission of the Twelve        |                |             |             |
| Parable of the Sower         |                |             |             |
| Transfiguration              |                |             |             |
| Rich Young Man               |                |             |             |
| Greatest Commandment         |                |             |             |

# *Characteristics of the Gospel of Matthew*

*For your information*

## **Audience**

Jewish Christians in Antioch in Syria around 70-90 A.D.

## **Essential Message**

Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah who fulfills Israel's hopes and the words of the prophets.

## **Key Emphasis**

Jesus' Teachings

## **Key Themes**

- Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy
- Jesus identified with the lowly
- Jesus is the world's savior, not just Israel's

## **Some Unique Passages**

|          |                                    |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| 1:20-25  | Joseph's Dream                     |
| 2:1-12   | Visit of the Wise Men              |
| 2:13-15  | Flight to Egypt                    |
| 9:27-31  | Healing of Two Blind Men           |
| 9:32-34  | Healing of a Mute Person           |
| 13:24-30 | Parable of the Weeds and the Wheat |
| 13:44    | Parable of the Buried Treasure     |
| 13:45-46 | Parable of the Fine Pearl          |
| 13:47-48 | Parable of the Thrown Net          |
| 17:24-27 | Payment of Temple Tax              |
| 18:23-25 | Parable of Unforgiving Servant     |
| 27:24    | Pilot Washes His Hands             |

# *Characteristics of the Gospel of Mark*

*For your information*

## **Audience**

Gentiles (non-Jewish Christians) in Rome, 65-70 A.D.

## **Essential Message**

Jesus is the suffering servant and the hidden Messiah. We learn this through his action and his miracles.

## **Key Emphasis**

Jesus' Actions

## **Key Themes**

- The identity of Jesus
- The importance of the cross
- Discipleship

## **Some Unique Passages**

11:11            The Survey of the Temple

16:14            The Appearance to the Eleven Apostles

# *Characteristics of the Gospel of Luke*

*For your information*

## **Audience**

Greeks in Greece, 70-90 A.D.

## **Essential Message**

Offer an orderly account of the ministry of Jesus so readers will rely on the gospel to build their faith.

## **Key Emphasis**

Jesus' Humanity

## **Key Themes**

- Salvation is a joyous surprise and is offered to everyone
- Jesus identifies with the lowly and defends the dignity of all
- Mary is the first disciple

## **Some Unique Passages**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 1:5-25   | Announcement of the Birth of John the Baptist                 |
| 1:39-56  | Mary Visits Elizabeth   |
| 2:1-20   | Birth of Jesus, Visit by Shepherds                            |
| 2:21-29  | Naming of Jesus, Presentation in the Temple                   |
| 2:41-50  | Boy Jesus in the Temple                                       |
| 6:12     | Retire to Pray  |
| 8:1-3    | Galilean Women Follow Jesus                                   |
| 9:51-56  | Anger of James and John, Feast of Tabernacles                 |
| 10:1-20  | Mission of the Seventy-two                                    |
| 10:29-37 | Parable of the Good Samaritan                                 |
| 10:38-42 | Visit to Martha and Mary                                      |
| 13:6-17  | Parable of the Barren Fig Tree & Cure of Woman on the Sabbath |
| 15:11-32 | Parable of the Prodigal Son                                   |
| 18:1-8   | Parable of the Persistent Widow                               |
| 22:43-44 | Jesus Comforted by an Angel                                   |
| 23:6-11  | Jesus Sent by Pilate to Herod                                 |

# *Line-by-Line Prayer*

With the lessons of the story in mind, each person in the group takes turns offering a line of the prayer. Children may need a prompt to compose their line, such as "Dear Jesus help me . . ." , or "Guide me to . . ." or "Thank you for . . ."

\*Keep this at home in a place where you can find it quickly to pray together each night!

**Dear Jesus,**

Person #1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person #2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person #3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person #4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person #5 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person #6 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person #7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_