

Lesson 7—Level I

Revelation

Purpose: Definition of Parable/ Parable as Revelation/Study of Parables in the Gospel of Luke. Some Miracles of Jesus and what they reveal.

Session at a Glance

- 7:00 p.m. Welcome
7:15 p.m. Suggested Opening Prayer: *Ignatian Litany of the Names of Jesus*
From *Hearts on Fire-Praying with Jesuits*
7:30 p.m. Definition of Parable/ Parable as Revelation
Parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 11:29-37
Parables of Lost Sheep, Lost Coin from the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 15
Parable of the Prodigal Son Luke 15: 11-32
8:15 p.m. Some Miracles of Jesus and what they reveal.
8:30 p.m. Closing Prayer: Act of Contrition, culminating prayer after
study of the Parables of Mercy in Luke 15

Catechist: **Opening Prayer:** the following litany is composed of the names of Jesus that St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order, used for Jesus in his letters and other writings. This litany is adapted for your use. Prepare a handout of the opening prayer and closing prayer (encourage youth to pray these prayers during the week.) For the opening prayer, allow each of the youth to take a turn at being the leader, and pray one of the names of Jesus. All respond “Have mercy on us”.

Opening Prayer

- Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary.....R. Have mercy on us
Jesus, eternal Lord of all things.....
Jesus, our kind Lord.....
Jesus, the power of God.....
Jesus, our redeemer.....
Jesus, our salvation.....
Jesus, our help and support.....
Jesus, our food and companion on our journey to God
Jesus, our model and guide.....
Jesus, now in glory.....
Jesus, our consoler.....
Jesus, our peace.....
Jesus, our joy.....
Jesus, our hope.....
Jesus, our life.....
Jesus, our reward exceedingly great.....
Jesus, true life of the world.....
All: Blessed be the name of Jesus, now and forever. Amen.

I. Definition of Parable/ Parable as Revelation

Catechist: The paragraphs below are background for you and information you can craft for the youth to introduce parables. Talk about the Good Samaritan parable with the youth and what it reveals.

Stories Jesus Told/Parable: This term signifies a placing of one thing beside another for the purpose of comparison. The word parable is of Greek origin-*para*, meaning “alongside of” and *ballein*, meaning “cast, place, or throw”. We use the term “para” today in e.g., paralegal-an assistant to a lawyer and in paraprofessional-one who assists a professional. Call the attention of the youth to the word “ballistic” which is from the same root. The Gospels confirm that parables were frequently used by Jesus. We read in Matthew 13:34 “All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He spoke to them only in parables...” Jesus, in his parables, used the things of daily life, among them: farming; shepherds; birds; flowers; lamps; children; merchants. Jesus used these ordinary things and wove them into a story with a twist or challenge for the hearer.
(cf. New Catholic Encyclopedia v. 10 pp. 984-988)

Revelation Wrapped in a Story: The parables reveal something of God. The parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:29-37, for example, demonstrates the general moral principle of loving one’s neighbor. The story reveals that in the eyes of God, compassion has the highest worth and that God desires that the needs of the person before us, should have our complete attention. Today, Jesus’ parables continue to teach, challenge and reveal what God wants us to know about him and how to live as his children.

Catechist: Read/discuss: *Catholic Youth Bible: Did you know-Parables* (p. 1236 NAB (same in all editions), NRSV p. 1139 (2005 edition p. 1119).

II. Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin

Catechist: Luke 15:1-10: The Lost Sheep, and The Lost Coin, followed by the Prodigal Son, Luke 15: 11-32, are called the Parables of Mercy. These three parables convey the joy of God at the return of the sinner. Have the youth read The Lost Sheep, followed by The Lost Coin. Discuss the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin parables with the youth, point out the following:

- something valuable has been lost (the sheep, the coin)
- the one who loses it expends unusual effort to find it (shepherd leaves the ninety-nine, searches for the lost sheep); (the woman searches, looks diligently, sweeps, seeking her coin)
- the finding is an occasion of joy expressed in a celebration (calling in the friends and neighbors “rejoice I have found my ... (sheep, coin.)

Catechist: Revelation in the Parables of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin:

- these parables reveal the work of Jesus seeking and saving that which is lost (sinners)
- the shepherd and the woman reveal the activity of God pursuing the sinner. When we sin, God always comes after us even before we repent.

Catechist: Read/discuss: *Catholic Youth Bible: Live It-Lost and Found* (p. 1353 NAB (same in all editions), NRSV p. 1227 (2005 edition p. 1207).

III. The Prodigal Son

Catechist: Have the youth read sections of the Prodigal Son.

Use three readers and tell the youth that the parable is similar to a three act play.

Have one of the youth announce the three acts.

Act One: The Fall of the Younger Son (Luke 15: 11-19)

Act Two: The Return of the Younger Son (Luke 15:20-24)

Act Three: The Older Brother and the Father (Luke 15: 25-32)

Catechist: This parable could be dramatized. Points of the Parable to emphasize:

- The younger son asks his father for his inheritance, (not a rebellious act).
- He squanders his inheritance and falls into decline.
- He has no money, he works for a gentile feeding pigs
(an unclean animal to Jews), a famine comes and he is starving.
- He comes to his senses and decides to return to his Father's house where he knows the servants have food, clothing and shelter.
- His father sees him coming, runs to meet him and embraces him.
- He tells his father that he has sinned and no longer deserves to be his son.
- His father responds by having his servants bring for his son, the finest garment, a ring for his finger and sandals. All three of these articles denote sonship.
In addition, the father orders a feast prepared for his returning son.
- The older son comes in from the fields and complains to his father about all the attention given to the returning son.
- The father tells his older son that he recognizes his fidelity but there is need for rejoicing as the younger son was dead and is come to life, was lost and now is found.

Catechist: Revelation in the Prodigal Son:

- God, in the person of the father in the parable, is revealed as compassionate, full of kindness and love.
- The parable reveals that we are loved as a son or daughter and created as such because of the surprising and boundless love of God.
- Our conversion or return to God is always met with acceptance.

IV. Some Miracles of Jesus and what they reveal

Catechist: All four Gospels recount miracles that Jesus performed during his earthly life. These miracles fall into three categories: nature miracles, healing miracles, raising from the dead miracles. Put these categories on the chalk board or on a chart pad. Ask the youth to tell you and the class some of the miracles that Jesus performed. Put their responses under one of the categories. Next, ask five

youth to read one miracle under each category below (mix up the order). List the miracles below under one of the categories on the chalk board or chart pad.

Examples:

Nature Miracles: **The Marriage Feast of Cana-John 2: 1-11**
 Jesus Calms the Storm at Sea-Mark 4:35-41

Healing Miracles: **Jesus Heals the Blind Man-Mark 10:46-52**
 Cure of Peter's Mother-in-law-Matthew 8:14-15

**Raising From Dead
Miracle:** **Raising of the Widow's Son at Nain-Luke 7:11-17**
 Raising of Lazarus -John 11:1-43

Read and discuss with the Youth: *Catholic Youth Bible*:

Did you Know? Miracles and the Reign of God (p. 1227 NAB (same in all edition), NRSV, p. 1134 (2005 edition p. 1113).

Catechist: Revelation in the Miracle Stories:

- Jesus, through his miracles, is revealing God's power.
- The miracles of Jesus are heralding the Kingdom of God where only God's power will prevail not the perils of nature, sickness, or death.

V. Closing Prayer: Recall briefly the Parables of Mercy and end with the following prayer:

Act of Contrition

**My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart,
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have
sinned against you whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ,
suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy. Amen.**

OUTCOMES

Outcome statements denote what the youth will be able to understand and communicate upon completion of Lesson 7.

- The gospels have many stories that Jesus told called parables. These stories tell us something about the goodness of God and about human nature.
 - In the parables of mercy in the gospel of Luke, chapter 15, God is revealed as a loving God who is always ready to forgive us when we sin.
 - In the Good Samaritan parable in the gospel of Luke, chapter 10, God reveals that compassion and attention to the needs of others are necessary for the Christian life.
 - The miracles of Jesus tell of the coming of God's Kingdom or Reign where the power of God will triumph over sickness, death, and the forces of nature.
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References

Donahue, SJ, John R., *The Gospel in Parable*, Fortress Press, Mifflintown, Pennsylvania, 1990.

Gowler, David B. *What Are They Saying About The Parables?* Paulist Press: Mahwah, New Jersey, 2000.

Harter, Michael, S.J., Editor, *Hearts on Fire-Praying with Jesuits*, Loyola Press: Chicago, 2005.

