

3rd Sunday of Lent (Year B)

John 2:13-25

In today's Gospel reading, we see Jesus express righteous anger. He sees that God's house, the Temple, has been polluted and filled with many other things. Jesus wants to be at the centre of our lives just as he wants God to be at the centre of His Temple (or for Catholics, His Church). Life can fill us with distractions, so it is our responsibility to take time to clear away the mess and create a space for Jesus.

Sharing Scripture

Share with the children the Gospel reading, **John 2:13-25**.

As you read this passage invite the children to use their imagination. Ask them to picture the scene in the temple, with animals, money changers, and Jesus taking action.

Encourage them to think more deeply about the passage by asking questions such as:

- + Why do you think Jesus was upset in the temple?
- + What did Jesus mean when He said He would raise the temple in three days?
- + How do you think the people in the temple felt when Jesus drove out the sellers?

Imagine if Jesus came to our Church right now. What would he think? Would he find that it was God's house? What if Jesus looked at each of us? What would he find is at the centre of our lives?

Each of us is a living temple, home to a beautiful spirit and filled with the grace of God. However, it is easy to let other things influence our lives and slowly replace God as the most important thing. Possessions, television, sports, money or power, can all become the centre of our lives. We may come to value these things more than family, friends or even God, and organise our lives around them, sacrificing our relationships with others.

This fracture in our relationships and turning away from God has spread out into the world, influencing the way that we care for creation. Pope Francis tells us that the ways we have neglected to care for the earth and people living in poverty are sins for which we need to repent. We must experience a conversion of heart, which once again places God at the centre of our lives and compels us to act against the pollution filling his 'temple,' the earth.

What would Jesus think if he came and walked around our community right now? Would he find that we are caring for creation with God in our hearts? Or, would he find that we have yet again filled God's temple with many other things, neglecting it and forgetting our Christian responsibility and purpose?

SCIAF

If you have the technology, share with the children the 'Laudato Si' Animation (primary) video on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9NJb1qFZcc>

Explain to the children that we have a responsibility to care for creation. When we have God at the centre of our lives, we can't help but to care for every living thing on our planet.

SCIAF is inspired by the Gospels to act for our common home, the earth. We're working with partners around the world to protect and clean-up creation in order to create a world that truly reflects God to all who live in it.

Catholic communities across Scotland are also inspired to care for our common home. Many of them are channeling the same righteous anger that Jesus expressed in the Temple to demand justice for the poor, the oppressed and the planet.

Everyone has a part to play in caring for creation and no one is either too young or too old to get involved!

Respond

Materials required

- + Markers/Crayons/Coloured Pencils
- + One copy of the 'Laudato Si' Colouring Sheet' per child

Helping those who need it, ask the children to write their prayer for creation. Ask them to reflect on ways that we can clear away the things that have replaced God in our lives and allowed us to treat the earth and one another in such a careless way.

If you have time, you may ask some of the children to read aloud their prayer before closing with an Our Father.