

Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk,*
so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,
now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. Alleluia!

(Antiphon, 1 Peter 2:2–3; Ps. 105:1–5, 8)

Gradual:

[Oh, come,] let us fix our eyes on Jesus,*
the author and perfecter of our faith,
who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame,*
and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. *(Heb. 12:2)*

Alleluia Verse: *(see last page)*

Collect: Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, enlighten by Your Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn that rejoicing in the knowledge of Your truth, they may worship You and serve You from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Installation or placing of Sunday School teachers and staff:

*(Use the order found on page 249 of *Lutheran Service Book Agenda*.)*

Children's Message: Abide in the Vine

(Visual Aid: A potted vine plant; from which you may remove a number of leaves or branches.)

I'd like for you to look at two leaves from this plant and see how they are alike and how they are different. (Pinch one leaf off, and hold it next to another that is still on the plant.) First notice how they are alike. (Discuss color, shape, texture, etc. Point out that the two leaves came from the same source.)

Now let's see how they are different. (There may be some differences in size and shape. One may be scarred.) But the greatest difference is that one is still connected to the plant and the other is not. Their past may be the same. But their futures are different. The one that has been removed from the plant will die soon. The other will continue to live.

Jesus tells us that we are all like leaves on a plant. We are alike in many ways. God created all of us. We were all born. We all have bodies and souls. We all share the experience of being people.

Each of us is also different from the others. We come in different colors, shapes, and sizes. Some have been scarred by sickness or accidents. But the big difference among people is our relationship to God. Some are still connected to God like this leaf is connected to the plant. Others are separated from God like *this* leaf is separated from the plant.

Because we are all sinners, we should fall off the plant. (Pick off several leaves.) Our sin separates us from God. But Jesus came to bring us back to God. He forgives the sin that separated us from God by paying for it Himself. Because He was once separated from God by death and came back to life, we can be with God again. Jesus tells us, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.” (John 15:4)

When we look at our past, we are all alike. We are all sinners. We all deserve to fall from the plant and die. But our future depends on our relationship with Christ. He tells us we do not have to die. Because He died for us we can live. We can receive strength from Him to do His will and live forever.

The big difference between the leaf that has been removed from the plant and the leaf on the plant is that the one still on the plant can continue to receive strength for the plant. Jesus tells us to abide in Him. So how do you abide in Him? Jesus connects Himself to you every time you hear His Word. Where do you hear Jesus’ Word? In Jesus’ house, the church, in Sunday School, and in your family when you have devotions. Be Jesus’ house, come to Sunday School, Abide in Him!

Sermon text from “The Gospel for Kids: Series B” by Eldon Weisheit © 1978 Concordia Publishing House.

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