Saint Camillus de Lellis

The Hands That Learned to Serve

Ages about 7-11 | Video 7:56 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth God's mercy gave Camillus a new beginning. He learned to serve Jesus by caring for sick people with skill, patience, and tenderness.

Learning goals Children will identify a change in Camillus, recall a caring action from the hospital, and plan a safe act of service that respects another person's needs.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: Can someone learn to make better choices after making a mistake? Introduce Camillus and invite children to notice how he uses his hands at the beginning and later in the story.

Watch and notice

Watch the story. If a pause helps, stop after Camillus brings water to the patient. Ask what he notices about the man. Resume to see how ordinary practice prepares the helpers for the flood.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What did Camillus ask God for on the road?
Forgiveness and help to begin again. He began turning away from his old choices; his troubles did not all disappear.

2. What made the cup of water an act of love?
He noticed the man's need, helped him drink, and waited patiently. The person mattered, not just finishing the task.

3. Why did the helpers practice changing bedding carefully?
They wanted to care for patients without hurting them. Love includes learning how to help well and working together.

4. Camillus still needed care himself. Could he also serve others?
Yes. Giving and receiving help can belong together. We can offer kindness within our abilities and ask adults for help.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Children draw a hospital action they remember and one safe way they can care for someone. Invite them to explain what the person in each picture needs.

Read & Write Children recall an action, explain why gentleness matters, and choose a realistic service plan. Accept a dictated response or one clear sentence for each prompt.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: offer the words notice, ask, listen, and help. Ask for one concrete action from the hospital.

Ages 9-11: distinguish a fresh start from having no consequences. Discuss why good intentions also need patience, practice, and help.

Notice, ask, help | Optional 4 minutes

Offer a pretend situation: someone is resting and feels lonely. Children suggest a kind question, then a safe response: make a card, offer quiet company, or ask an adult what would help. Compare helping thoughtfully with deciding for the person.

Look for understanding Look for a story detail and the idea that mercy leads to changed actions. A service plan should consider the other person's wishes and the child's abilities.

Closing prayer Jesus, thank you for your mercy. Help us begin again, notice people who need care, and serve with gentle hands and loving hearts. Saint Camillus, pray for us. Amen.

At home With an adult, choose a small kindness for someone who is ill or lonely. Ask what is welcome; a short call or drawing may be enough.

Handout answer notes Accept water, clean bedding, comfort, or another story detail. Care should respect the person, not merely finish a job. Look for a safe, specific plan with appropriate adult help.

Teach with care

Explain gambling simply as risking money on a game of chance. No child needs to describe family money troubles, illness, or personal wrongdoing. Camillus became a priest and founded the Camillians. The film includes dramatized speech. His painful leg was not a sign that his conversion failed. Do not reenact patient lifting or flood rescues; children can seek an adult's help.

Words to explain Conversion: turning toward God and learning to live his way. Mercy: love that responds to suffering and offers forgiveness.

Sources for the leader

Life and conversion: Camillian Order: The Founder

Merciful service: Matthew 25:35-40

Gentle hands, loving heart

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God helped Camillus begin again and learn to care.

Name _____

Adult helper Read aloud. Invite drawing, pointing, or spoken answers. Writing is optional.

1 Draw one way Camillus cared for a patient.

2 Draw a safe kindness you can offer someone.

Tell What does the person in your picture need? How could you ask?

Pray Jesus, help me notice others and care with love. Amen.

At home Share your picture and one thing you learned about God or following Jesus.

Learning to serve with love

Saint Camillus de Lellis

Think about Camillus's choices. Write or tell your answers.

Name _____

1 Remember

What did Camillus do for someone in the hospital?

Camillus helped by ...

2 Understand

Why was it important to be gentle, even when a job took longer?

The person mattered because ...

3 Put faith into practice

Choose a safe way to care for someone. How will you find out what helps?

I can ask ...

Pray Jesus, help me notice others and care with love. Amen.

Go deeper How can accepting help be part of a loving life, as well as giving help?