

SAMPLE HOMILY

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Jesus began his ministry after he was baptized by John in the River Jordan, and that's when our ministry begins too. When we're baptized we are made ready to serve God. Even if we are just babies, our baptism makes us part of God's family and turns us into his helpers.

When we're baptized, the people who love us make promises with us and for us to do the work that Jesus taught people to do. We promise to respect and love our neighbors, to follow Jesus, and to help those in need. These are important and serious promises, but God gives us people to help us keep the promises.

Today we're going to think about neighbors that we will probably never meet but are part of God's big family. Children around the world want to grow up healthy and strong and their families love them just like your family loves you. But not everyone has the things they need to grow up healthy and strong, and that's when we can help be good neighbors.

Children and grown-ups need healthy food and people to love. We all need someone to listen to us and someone to play with. We need music and laughter, friends and hugs and prayers. Most of us have the things we need, and there are people who work to help everyone have the things they need. These helpers go around the world to be teachers and friends to families who want to learn about growing up safe and strong. We can help too by praying for children and families who are missing the things they need.

Praying is a good way to be a helper, and a good way to keep your promise to God. You can also tell your friends that you are praying for children and families who need help. You can be thankful for all the things that you have and learn about how people around the world grow and learn in different ways.

Our church, and other churches like ours, are helpers too. We send money and prayers to Episcopal Relief & Development's ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE campaign. This way we can share with families who are learning to grow and be healthy. The people who work for Episcopal Relief & Development want us to all work together to better know our neighbors.

We are all part of God's big family. Be thankful for neighbors we haven't ever met, who live far away, but who know that we care about them.