

GABRIEL'S QUEST

Call to Order

Lesson Link: God created an ordered world with everything we need to live, love, and be happy.

Gabriel Romero sat at the kitchen table eating breakfast. It was the morning of the first day of second grade. There was a lot of shouting and rushing in other parts of the house. The rest of the kids were getting ready for school.

Uncle Jon Perry stood next to the kitchen counter. He sipped his coffee and laughed. "It's like this every year. They're like a bunch of squirrels," he said.

Uncle Jon wasn't really Gabriel's uncle. Uncle Jon was a distant relative. But he was like an uncle to Gabriel. Just like Belle Perry was like an aunt. And their kids were like very close cousins.

Gabriel had moved in with the Perry family early in the summer because his grandmother had a stroke. She could no longer take care of Gabriel. Now she lived in a special home. Gabriel's mother had died when he was a baby. His father was overseas doing special jobs for the army. He liked living with the Perrys.

Gabriel heard shouts and banging upstairs. Twelve-year-old Andrew called out about a missing shirt. Eleven-year-old Lizzy couldn't find her favorite notebook. Nine-year-old Nick had put on mismatched socks. Nick's twin sister, Samantha, was upset because she had spilled toothpaste on her school uniform skirt.

"Jon!" Aunt Belle cried out.

"Coming!" Uncle Jon called back. He put down his coffee mug and sprinted up the stairs. Gabriel smiled and shook his head.

Gabriel and the Perry family made it to St. Clare of Assisi Catholic School just in time for the morning assembly.

Gabriel sat with the other second graders near his new teacher, Sister Teresa. Sister Teresa was a round, cheerful woman. After



the morning assembly, she led the kids to their class. Gabriel walked into the room and was shocked by what he saw.

The desks and chairs were not in rows. They were all pushed to one side of the room. Some were tipped over and upside down. The walls were empty. The window blinds hung lopsided.

"Come in!" Sister Teresa said as if nothing was wrong.

The kids moved to the middle of the room. They were confused. There was nowhere to hang their coats or put their things.

Sister Teresa stood at the front of the class. She asked, "What's wrong?"

"It's a mess," said Gabriel's friend Sean.

"What's wrong with a mess?" Sister Teresa asked.

"Where are we supposed to sit down?" asked a girl named Zelda.

"Where do we put our stuff? How will we get our work done?" asked the other kids.

"Oh! You need places to put your things? You want to get work done?" Sister Teresa asked with a big grin. "You came to school thinking everything should be arranged so you can learn. Is that right?"

The kids said yes.

Sister Teresa waved for them to gather around her. She said in a warm voice, "Long before school started this morning, the teachers in this school worked very hard to make sure everything was the way it should be. That's one way we show how much we care about you."

"Does this mean you don't care about us?" a boy named Max asked.

Sister Teresa laughed. "I care deeply about you. That's why I wanted you to learn this little lesson."

Just then, Father Cliff, Deacon Chuck, and Mr. Norm came into the room. "Are you ready?" asked Father Cliff.

Sister Teresa said, "Yes, Father."

Together, the grown-ups quickly put the tables and chairs in neat rows. Sister Teresa invited the students to help. Posters and pictures were hung on the walls. The closets were opened for the coats. The cubbyholes were all set up. Finally, everyone was able to sit down and the school day really began.

Sister Teresa looked cheerfully at the class. "Long before any of us got here, God created the world," she said. "He put everything in place for us because He loves us. He has given us the things we need to live, learn, love, and get to Heaven."

"But I liked the room the way it was before," Gabriel's friend Philip said. "It reminded me of my bedroom."

Sister Teresa and the students laughed.

Questions:

1. **What was wrong with a messy classroom?** (Answers may include the students weren't able to put their things away, they couldn't learn, and they felt uncomfortable.)
2. **What did the students learn a clean classroom meant?** (Answers may include the teacher loves them, a clean classroom makes a difference, and they are happier in a clean classroom.)
3. **Do you see order in the world? Where?** (Answers may include the order of night and day, days of the week, seasons, pear trees make pears, and the temperature in most of the world is perfect for people.)
4. **Why do you think there is order in the world?** (Answers may include God loves us, God wants us to be happy, and God is perfect and all-powerful and wise.)