



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A *Green*

'Parable of the talents'

1 Thessalonians 5:1-6 Psalm 63 Matthew 25: 14-15, 19-21

When we love someone, we sometimes give them a gift, something special for them to use and enjoy. God has given talents to each one of us as a sign of his love; these are gifts from God.



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, starting with the Gospel. (You may choose to use or focus on one reading only, but remember that the Gospel may not be omitted.) Then look through the preparatory material that follows and familiarise yourself with the Liturgy Outline.

GOSPEL

Matthew 25: 14-15, 19-21

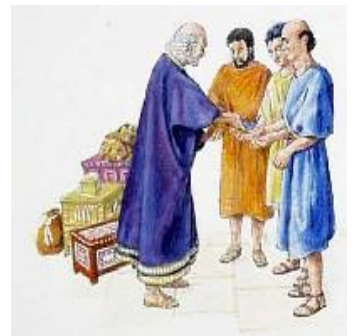
Jesus told his disciples this story about the kingdom of God:

"The kingdom is like what happened when a man went away and put his three servants in charge of all he owned. The man knew what each servant could do. So he handed five thousand coins to the first servant, two thousand to the second, and one thousand to the third. Then he left the country.

"Some time later the master of those servants returned. He called them in and asked what they had done with his money. The servant who had been given five thousand coins brought them in with the five thousand he had earned.

He said, 'Sir, you gave me five thousand coins, and I have earned five thousand more.'

"Wonderful!" his master replied, 'you are a good and faithful servant. I left you in charge of only a little, but now I will put you in charge of much more. Come and share in my happiness.



Brothers and sisters:

I don't need to write you about the time or date when all this will happen. You surely know that the Lord's return will be as a thief coming at night. People will think they are safe and secure. But destruction will suddenly strike them like the pains of a woman about to give birth. And they won't escape.

My dear friends, you don't live in darkness, and so that day won't surprise you like a thief. All of you belong to the light and live in the day. We don't live in the night or belong to the dark. Others may sleep, but we should stay awake and be alert.

PSALM**Psalm 63**

Response: The Lord is my light and my salvation

You, LORD, are the light that keeps me safe. I am not afraid of anyone.
You protect me, and I have no fears.

LORD, I know I will live to see how kind you are.
Trust the LORD! Be brave and strong and trust in the LORD.

Second Reading not included.

*Scriptures from the Lectionary for Masses with Children (CEV)
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Background to the Readings for Leaders

Our first reading today explores two examples of suddenness – a thief in the night and the onset of labour pains. When the hour comes it will be too late to prepare. Advice on what to do in the waiting time is given. Matthew also is giving instruction to the early church in Christian living in the in-between time, the time of waiting for the return of Jesus. The absentee landowner has given his servants a fortune and on his return they must show that they had followed instructions and invested wisely. By contrast the Jews, who were repositories of God's treasure, had done nothing with it. The coin referred to, a Jewish talent, contained more than 43,000g of silver, a substantial sum of money which at that time would have bought an ox. Absentee landlords were common in Jesus' time. The coins in the story were not equally distributed. We are each endowed with different 'talents' so that we can work together generously and share our abilities. With his story Jesus would have challenged the images that his hearers may have had about just how 'exacting' God was considered. We each have responsibility for every one of our gifts – to use them rightly is to share in the joy of God's kingdom.

Images from the Readings

- Put his servants in charge
- I will put you in charge of much more
- Come and share my happiness
- People think they are safe
- Stay awake and be alert

Reflection for Leaders

It is always a temptation to look at other people's talents and gifts and consider them of more value than our own. But today's Gospel challenges us to reflect on the God-given gifts that we have, and perhaps not value much, and to use them wisely, generously, and for the benefit of others. Jesus, after all, praised the servants for using their talents not just for having them. Can you name your gifts and talents? How do you use them? It is often the little things that we do for each other that mean the most, and we often overlook some of our most basic gifts. We are also challenged to re-examine our image of God, as Jesus was challenging his listeners. Do we see God as shepherd, judge, father, mother, rock, king? Does our image of God match what Scripture tells us? How might our image of God influence the way we respond to the invitation to enter the kingdom? During the week make an effort to use your talents specifically to bless others.



Your talent is Gods
gift to you
What you do with it is
your gift back to God

Reflecting on the Readings with the children

Before Sunday read over the suggested discussion points given in the Leader's Liturgy Outline. With the 8-12 year olds: First, listen to the children's own responses to the Reading/s and then, if needed, use some of the discussion starters suggested.

With the 5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'.

Suggested Focus

Prepare a focus for the area where the children's Liturgy of the Word is to be held: Green cloth, Lectionary, a candle, a bowl and a chocolate coin for each child.



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

At a suitable moment after the Opening Rites, but before the First Reading is proclaimed, the children are presented with the Children's Lectionary and a candle and sent, with their ministers, to the place where they will celebrate their own Liturgy of the Word, with words of dismissal such as the following:

INVITATION – Pōwhiri I invite the children to join in the procession for their celebration of the Liturgy of the Word.

To the Minister of the Word: Receive this Book of Readings and proclaim God's Word faithfully to the children entrusted to your care.

Receive this candle as the light of Christ who is present in his Word.

PROCESSION WITH THE BOOK OF READINGS – Te Kapa o te Pukapuka Tapu

WELCOME – Ko te whakataua

Leader: O God, every good gift we have comes through our generosity. Help us to use them wisely for the good of others and to honour you.

R Amen.

First Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

(if used)

The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki

Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalm 63

Response: The Lord is my light and my salvation
(or another suitable response known by the children)

General: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Fill us O Lord with your word.

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Your word is life for our souls.

Gospel: Matthew 25: 14-15, 19-21

Minister of the Word:	A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
Children:	Glory to you, O Lord / Korōria ki ā koe, e te Ariki
At the end of the Gospel:	The Gospel of the Lord
Children:	Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ / Kia whakanuia rā koe, e te Ariki, e Hēhu Karaiti.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH THE CHILDREN – Whai Whakaaro

8-12 year olds: Suggested Beginning: A good place to begin is with the question: What did you hear? Allow each child the opportunity to respond in their own words to hearing the Word of God. Then begin a general discussion, building on these responses, perhaps using some prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas.

- In today's Gospel Jesus talks about thousands of coins that three servants were given. One of the servants earned as much money again. Do you know what this is called? (investing) Was the owner pleased? What did he say to his servant?
- Do you think Jesus is really just talking about money? What do you think this might have meant? (gifts, talents).
- Do you have a special gift or talent? (e.g. a good reader, good at sport, a willing helper, someone who encourages others, etc) What is your gift? _____
- Does everyone have the same gift? Why not? (we need each other so that when we work together everyone benefits)
- What do you think is the message of Jesus' story? What does this story tell us about God? What does Jesus praise, having the talent or using the talent?
- Jesus wants us to understand that we should use our talents wisely. What does this mean? How can we use the gifts that we have? (whenever we share our gifts with anyone, even just a small thing, God is pleased)

5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'

LITURGICAL ACTION – Ko te Ritenga Karakia

*Each child is to place a chocolate coin in a bowl to symbolise using our gifts together for God.
(at the end of the liturgy coins could be distributed to the children to eat)*



PROFESSION OF FAITH – Panui o te Whakapono

We believe in God the Father,
who made the whole world.
We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
who was born in Bethlehem
and lived among us,
who died on the cross for us,
and rose from the dead.
We believe in the Holy Spirit
who brings life and love to us all.
We believe that the Church is one family,
and that one day
we will share everlasting life
with God in heaven.
Amen.

each
others
Enjoy
talents
and
be grateful
for
your
own.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL – *Te Īnoinga o te Hunga Whakapono*

(Here are some suggested intercessions; you are encouraged to compose your own according to the age and experience of the children)

Leader: Let us call upon our God, giver of gifts and giver of life, who is near to us in every need.

- That all who serve God's family, the Church, use their gifts wisely and generously to help all who need it

Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That those who are poor and ill will find great comfort from the care of others

Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That we learn to appreciate our gifts and those of the people around us, so that we can learn to work together

Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- For peace in our homes, our schools, our community

Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God, giver of all that is good, we thank you for all that you have given us. We ask that you hear the prayers that we make to you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

The children re-join the assembly before the prayers over the gifts.

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Liquid Picture

Matthew 25: 14-15, 19-21

Parable of the talents

Note to leaders: The following **liquid picture** is appropriate to use with children of any age but especially suitable for **younger children**.

How to do liquid pictures:

Liquid Pictures is a form of drama which allows a story to be presented in a flowing or liquid manner. The process follows this pattern:

- Divide the story or Scriptural passage into five or six main statements.
- Accompany each statement with a simple action that can be held in a freeze frame position.
- Choose one child to say each statement and do a simple action. These children form a straight line facing the audience.
- A leader introduces the story.
- The first child steps forward, repeats the statement two or three times (once is not enough for children to remember!) then freezes.
- The second child steps forward, repeats the statement and freezes.
- The process continues until the last child finishes.
- The leader concludes with a simple statement.

Leader: A rich man once gave his money to three servants to look after ...

Five thousand coins!

Yea, I can double that!

But are you being honest?

Two thousand coins!

Wow, I can double that!

But are you being honest?

One thousand coins!

Here it is, safe and sound!

Now that's honest.



Leader: Be honest in the way you treat people.

From 'Just Imagine 4, Many Creative ways of presenting Scripture' written by Rina Wintour, Mountjoy Enterprises, www.mountjoyenterprises.com.au. Available from the Liturgy Centre.