



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

The Baptism of the Lord, Year A,B,C

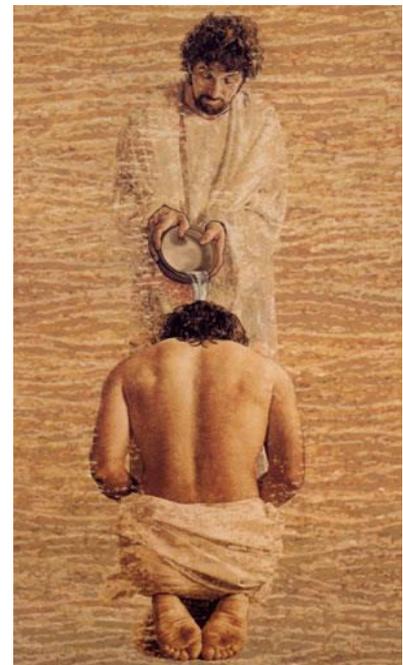
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“This is my beloved Son”

3:15-16, 21-22

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7, Psalm 29, Acts 10:34-38, Luke

Jesus was baptised in order to receive the Holy Spirit for his work of teaching and healing, so that everyone would know he was the Son of God. Have you attended any baptisms? What are the special symbols used in the ceremony? – Promises, water, holy oil, white garment, lighted candle. What does our baptism mean to us?



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Baptism of the Lord, 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.

(The Lectionary for Masses with Children gives Luke's Gospel, 3:15,16,21-22 for all three years of the Church's liturgical cycle, A, B, and C.)

GOSPEL

Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

Everyone became excited and wondered, “Could John be the Messiah?”

John said, “I am just baptizing with water. But someone more powerful is going to come, and I am not good enough even to untie his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

After everyone else had been baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. Then as he prayed, the sky opened up, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in the form of a dove. A voice from heaven said, “You are my own dear Son, and I am pleased with you.”

Here is my servant! I have made him strong. He is my chosen one, and I am pleased with him.

I will give him my Spirit, and he will bring justice to the nations. He won't shout or yell or call out in the streets. He won't quit or give up until he brings justice to all the earth, and people in foreign lands long for his teaching.

I, the Lord, chose you because of my kindness, and I am here at your side. I created and appointed you to bring light and my promise of hope to the nations, and set prisoners free from dark dungeons.

PSALM

Psalm 29

Response: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

The voice of the Lord echoes over the oceans. He thunders above the roar of the raging seas, and his voice is mighty and marvellous. **R**

The glorious Lord God thunders above the roar of the raging seas, and the temple is filled with shouts of praise. The Lord rules on his throne, king of the flood forever. **R**

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

The reading from Isaiah is the first of what are called the Servant Songs. We now see the servant as being Jesus, the Messiah, a leader who will bring justice, peace and healing. Before Jesus came, the Jews felt that God's Spirit was no longer alive in the world. God's communication with the people had ceased since the time of the Prophets. But the baptism of the Lord in the Jordan once again signals a renewal of the relationship between God and all the people, including Gentiles.

By Jewish law, Jesus was probably about thirty years old, the legal age for public teaching. He was baptised as a sign of his obedience and compliance with the will of God. In Jewish literature, a voice from heaven is the sign of a religious teacher, a prophet. The readings are full of symbolism about the renewed relationship God is instituting to end our separation. The word baptism comes from a Greek word meaning 'to plunge'. The first Christians were baptised by being plunged into running streams or rivers, following the practice of John. Later, large fonts were built in churches and baptism of the faithful (usually adults) was by full immersion.

Images from the Readings

- Here is my servant
- Chosen and appointed
- The gift of the Holy Spirit and power
- Baptising with water
- I am pleased with you

Reflection for Leaders

The feast of the Baptism of the Lord, ends the season of Christmas. Baptism is the first of the seven sacraments of the Church. This feast retells the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Immersion in water symbolises not only death and purification, but also regeneration and renewal. The white garment represents the new life in Christ; the oil symbolises the anointing into the ministry of Jesus – priest, prophet and king. The lit candle represents the light of Christ in our lives.

The mainstream Christian churches recognise the same baptism, so a person baptised into one of these churches need not repeat the process if they change to another denomination. As we consider the privileges and responsibilities of our own baptism this week, let us reflect on our own sense of being set apart and chosen by God.

Let us consider what it means to be a baptised Christian in this country, in our city, town, and place.

What have been the consequences of our baptism, and how is our life different because of it? How strong is your sense of being 'beloved' and 'favoured' by God? How much time do you spend alone in prayer?

Reflection 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:

White cloth, Lectionary, a candle, a bowl of water, a white garment and a small bottle of oil



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

The Baptism of the Lord, Year A, B, C

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
procession for their

I invite the children to join in the
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 whakatau

Leader: O God, we became your children at our baptism. Help us to know your love so we can share it freely with others.

R Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

(if used)

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

Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalms 29 (if used)

Response: The Lord will bless his people with peace.

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: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

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

Suggested Beginning: A good place to begin is with the question: What did you hear? Allow children 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.

- Have you ever been to a baptism? Can you remember what happened? What were the special symbols used? (white garment, holy oil, water, lighted candle, promises made)
- When we are baptised we receive the Holy Spirit and power, just as Jesus did. Then we become 'beloved' sons and daughters of God, just as Jesus was.
- When Jesus was baptised, this was the beginning of his work among the people. What was his work? (serve others and tell them of God's love)
- Our baptism means that we share that same work. In what ways can we do this? How can we be like Jesus at home, school, with our friends?

LITURGICAL ACTION – Ko te Ritenga Karakia

Invite children to come forward and use the water in the bowl to sign their foreheads. They could use their name and repeat the words that God spoke over Jesus when he was baptised: “N____, you are my own dear child, I am pleased with you.”



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.

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: Believing the promises of the Word we have just heard, let us call upon God for all our needs:

- For the Church, that all who belong through Baptism will live as signs of God's love and truth

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

- That we share the gifts that we have to help and support each other

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

- That we have the courage to go where God leads us

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

- That all people will come to know the gift of Jesus who brings true peace

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

Leader: Loving God, help us to share your love and all that you have given us, to make this world a place of welcome. We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord

All: **Amen.**

The children rejoin the assembly before the completion of the prayers over the gifts.