



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Trinity Sunday

White

'I will be with you always'

Deuteronomy 4:39-40 Psalm 33 Romans 8:14-17 Matthew 28:16-20



We have many different ways of relating to people in our families. We might be a son or a daughter, a niece or a nephew, a brother or a sister.

We might be a cousin, a granddaughter or grandson.

Sometimes we might even be an aunt or an uncle.

God shares life with us

through the three persons of the Holy Trinity.

We share the love of God, the goodness of Jesus the Son and the friendship of the Holy Spirit.

Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration, begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for Trinity Sunday, 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 28:16-20

Jesus' eleven disciples went to a mountain in Galilee, where Jesus had told them to meet him. They saw him and worshiped him, but some of them doubted.

Jesus came to them and said: "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth! Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to do everything I have told you.

"I will be with you always, even until the end of the world."

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 4:39-40

Moses said to the people: "Today there is something you must learn and never forget. The Lord God rules in heaven above and on earth below. There is no other god. Obey his laws and commands that I am teaching you today. Then all will go well for you and your descendants. You will always live in the land that the Lord your God is giving you forever."

PSALM

Psalm 33

Response: **Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own**

The Lord is truthful; he can be trusted.
He loves justice and fairness, and he is kind to everyone everywhere on earth.

The Lord made the heavens and everything in them by his word.
As soon as he spoke the world was created;
at his command, the earth was formed.

We depend on you, Lord to help and protect us.
Be kind and bless us! We depend on you.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:14-17

Brothers and Sisters: Only those who are led by God's Spirit are his children. God's Spirit doesn't make us slaves who are afraid of him. Instead, we become his children and call him our Father. God's Spirit makes us sure that we are his children. His Spirit lets us know that together with Christ we will be given what God has promised. We will also share in the glory of Christ, because we have suffered with him.

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

Each of these readings gives us an insight into the mystery of God. The First Reading is from a sermon that God put into the mouth of Moses which is used as an introduction to the Ten Commandments in the Book of Deuteronomy. It reflects on the chosen people's experience of God and God's creating Word in the creation story; their experience of God in the history of Israel and the choosing of Israel as a special people set apart; of God the deliverer saving the chosen people from the Egyptians, and finally their experience of the God of the covenant whose

precepts must be obeyed. The second reading recalls the feast of Pentecost celebrated last week and God's gift of life, power and peace to those who know and trust in Jesus Christ. Finally the words that close the Gospel of Matthew remind us that as God sent Jesus and Jesus sent his disciples, we – the baptised – are the new disciples, newly sent to preach, baptise and teach. The children should leave today's liturgy of the Word knowing that God loves them and wants to be close to them.

From the earliest times the Church has pondered the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity which is central to the life and faith of Christians. Different images of the Trinity such as Rublev's Icon, St Patrick's shamrock or the symbol of the triangle are all different ways or attempts to explore the mystery of the Trinity, God who is three in one. The good thing about a mystery is there is always more we can learn about it! (*'Mystery is not that which I cannot know, but that which I cannot exhaust.'* Karl Rahner.)



Images from the Readings

- Baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
- Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own
- I will be with you always

Reflection for Leaders

We have no adequate language for God because God is beyond any single image we may have. We experience God in Jesus Christ who shares with us his experience of God as creator, redeemer and "one of intimate relationship". Our experience of this relationship is the spirit of God living in us.

The last sentence of the Gospel "I will be with you always, even until the end of the world," encapsulates Jesus' role in the lives of us all.



Our God is a God of relationships. The God of our experience is the God we meet in everyday life. We proclaim that we are baptised Christians every time we make the Sign of the Cross and say the words "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Today we celebrate the facets of that relationship, a loving, but a wholly dependent relationship on our part.

In the Gospel Jesus tells us through the disciples to preach, baptise and teach in the name of God. The God who loves us as intimately as a parent; whose own son Jesus shows us a love so great, he died on the cross and rose again to save us from the power of sin; whose spirit fills us with God's own life and warms our hearts with the fire of God's love living within us. Like the disciples we are sent to baptise, preach, spread the Good News of Jesus, to encourage, explain and show unexpected, unasked for, love for others.

The children know instinctively what unconditional love is because they experience it, hopefully, in the shelter of their own families. Such love does not have to be earned but is present like a sheltering roof, or four sturdy walls that offer warmth and protection.

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:

White cloth, Lectionary, three white candles, an Icon of the Trinity



LITURGY OUTLINE

Trinity Sunday

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 whakatau

Leader: O God, Gathered today we remember Jesus' farewell message to us. Help us to remember always who we are, and whose we are.

R Amen.

First Reading: Deuteronomy 4:39-40

(if used)

The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki
Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalms 33

Response: **Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own**

Second Reading: Romans 8:14-17

(if used)

The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki
Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

D G Bm A D G Asus⁴ A

Easter: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Je - sus is ri - sen from death._____

Bm G D A G A D

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. He is the light of the world.

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

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, to stimulate ideas:*

- Do you know what this Icon represents? *The Holy Trinity. Trinity means something made up of three and today we give thanks for the three persons of God.*
- Who are the three persons who make up the Holy Trinity? *The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Can you think of some different ways and times that we use these words? Think about what you do when you come into church and bless yourself with holy water. (The sign of the Cross, - also the signing of our head, lips and heart before the reading of the Gospel and the 'Glory Be' prayer.)*
In the Gospel of Matthew we heard today, Jesus' parting words to his followers "I will be with you always, even until the end of the world."—these are the very last words of the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus was talking to his disciples and to us as well when he said "I will be with you always even until the end of the world."
- Close your eyes and listen to these words as though Jesus is speaking to you in a special way
- What do these words mean for you?

Jesus asked the disciples and us also to do something. He told them and us to go to the people of all nations and make them his disciples.

- What can you do to spread the teachings of Jesus? *There are many different ways we can teach others.* What are some of these ways?
- What opportunities can you find in your daily life to spread the teachings of Jesus?

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

Talk to the children about baptism.

What happens, what words are said, what do they mean? Why water? You could record the words used at baptism as the group remembers them on a large piece of card. After the liturgy this can be carried back into the church where all can see it - a reminder of who we are and whose we are.



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 Īnoīnga 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: With trust in our hearts let us speak to God of our needs:

- For the Church throughout the world, that the Good News will reach every household.
Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou
- For those suffering hunger, that they will be strong in spirit and not give up hope. Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou
- That we will be blessed with a Government that cares for all our people and acts to help the poor. Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou
- That we will recognise and reach out to the lonely, the left out, those we find it hard to like, the sick, the hungry, the grumpy, the unhappy. Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

Leader: God our Creator and Saviour listen with favour to the prayers of your children made through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen**

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

