



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Green

'Feeding many people'

2 Kings 4:42-44 Psalm 145 Ephesians 4:1-6 John 6:1-15

When Jesus saw the need of the people and set out to give them food to eat, he was setting us an example to follow. This Gospel story challenges us to respond to the stark reality of one person dying from hunger every 3.6 seconds.

This Gospel story is a story of abundance.

There is more than enough food available to feed the world.

What is needed is for more people to follow the example of the child in the story who gave Jesus the food he had to be shared with those in need.



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration, begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Seventeenth 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

John 6:1-15

Jesus crossed Lake Galilee, which was also known as Lake Tiberias. A large crowd had seen him work miracles to heal the sick, and those people were with him. It was almost time for the Jewish festival of Passover, and Jesus went up on a mountain with his disciples and sat down. When Jesus saw the large crowd coming towards him, he asked Philip, "Where will we get enough food to feed all these people?" He said this to test Philip, since he already knew what he was going to do.

Philip answered, "Don't you know that it would take almost a year's wages just to buy only a little bread for each of these people?" Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the disciples. He spoke up and said, "There is a boy here who has five small loaves of barley bread and two fish. But what good is that with all these people?"



The ground was covered with grass, and Jesus told his disciples to have everyone sit down. About five thousand people were in the crowd. Jesus took the bread in his hands and gave thanks to God. Then he passed the bread to the people, and he did the same with the fish, until everyone had plenty to eat. The people ate all they wanted, and Jesus told his disciples to gather up the leftovers, so that nothing would be wasted. The disciples gathered them up and filled twelve large baskets with what was left over from the five barley loaves. After the people had seen Jesus work this miracle, they began saying, "This must be the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

Jesus realised that they would try to force him to be their king. So he went up on a mountain, where he could be alone.

FIRST READING

2 Kings 4:42-44

One day a man from the town of Baal Shalishah came with some food for Elisha. The man brought him twenty loaves of barley bread that had been made from the first crop of grain. He also brought some fresh heads of grain.

Elisha told his servant. "Let the people have it to eat." His servant replied, "This isn't enough to feed a hundred people." But Elisha told him, "Give the food to the people! The Lord has said that when they are through eating there will be some left over."

The servant gave them the food. And when they had finished eating there was some left over, just as the Lord had promised.

PSALM

Psalm 145

Response: **You open your hand to feed us, Lord; you answer all our needs.**
 or Alleluia!

All creation will thank you, and your loyal people will praise you.
They will tell about your marvellous kingdom and your power. **R**

Everyone depends on you, and when the time is right, you provide them with food.
By your own hand you satisfy the desires of all who live. **R**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 4:1-6

Brothers and sisters: as a prisoner of the Lord, I beg you to live in a way that is worthy of the people God has chosen to be his own. Always be humble and gentle. Patiently put up with each other and love each other. Try your best to let God's Spirit keep your hearts united. Do this by living at peace. All of you are part of the same body. There is only one Spirit of God, just as you were given one hope when you were chosen to be God's people.

We have only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. There is one God who is Father of all people. Not only is God above all others, but he works by using all of us, and he lives in all of us.

Scriptures from the Lectionary for Masses with Children (CEV)
© Archdiocese of Chicago LTP. 1994 Used with permission

Background to the Readings for Leaders

The First Reading is a short story taken from a collection of stories about Elisha nearly all showing him as a wonder worker. The story in the First Reading is reflected in the Gospel and both stories follow a similar pattern:

- Food is brought to the man of God.
- The amount of food is specified.
- Someone objects that the quantity is inadequate.
- The man of God commands that it be distributed.
- There is enough to eat and some left over.

As a Palestinian Jew, Jesus was brought up in a religion which hallowed everyday things. Food was a holy thing. The law required people to say a prayer of thanks every time they had eaten. According to the author of John's Gospel, this story takes place around the time of Passover. The Passover recalled the feeding of the nation with manna in the desert, one of the expectations of the coming messiah is that he would feed the people as Moses had done. When the people try to make Jesus into the king they expect and want he flees into the hills. The temptation and the opportunity are there to exercise the fragile power and authority of earthly kingship and Jesus avoids it and heads for the hills. The wilderness setting is the place he returns to, the familiar ground on which previously he had fought temptation and won, alone with God. We begin this week to read the Gospel of John and for this and the next four Sundays we read from it, and study and reflect on what it is that we do when we stand at the table of the Lord, take bread, break it and distribute it week after week.

The Second Reading, originally part of a homily to the newly baptised, encourages them and us to be steadfast in hope and love and to be united to one another as God is one.

Images from the Readings

- Already knew
- Nothing wasted
- Be alone
- Feed us Lord

Reflection for Leaders

God provides the basic needs of human life. In today's readings these needs are supplied in the form of food — an essential ingredient for human survival. What we and the disciples of Jesus at that time need to learn is that Jesus is not only resourceful, he himself is the resource.

The lesson is that God is the source of all and will supply all we require; God provides. Even in times and places where it doesn't seem possible, God provides. God provides for the needy abundantly, even to the point of over-abundance. This lesson is summed up in the response to the Psalm

“The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs”

Jesus feeds the people and the people are still hungry and follow him for more of what he has to offer them. We see Jesus' power over nature illustrated in today's reading, when he multiplies loaves and fishes. We remember how he once walked on water and how he calmed the storm. Even today these deeds make us cry out in wonder as we look out for the hand of God in the world around us.

The acts of providence performed by both Elisha and Jesus the Messiah in taking bread, giving thanks, and distributing it to those in need, remind us that we too perform this act through God's saving love each Sunday when we gather to give thanks and remember.

There is a challenge here for us too. Only when we share the little we think we have, will we discover how much we have left over. The exhorting words of Paul are also to be remembered as we prepare what we want the children to take from these readings. We are one as Christ and the One who sent him are one. We are one in faith, hope and love.

The children might enjoy the simple act of going over the *actions* described in today's reading from John's Gospel. Talk about food; bread in particular — how it builds up our body and how



spiritual food strengthens our spirit and makes us one with each other through Christ. Leaders could bring some bread that could be blessed broken and distributed to the children. The idea of everyone sharing the same loaf can be discussed.

We are each part of the Church which comes together on Sundays to celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ, this is what binds us together as one people, this bread that we share and eat.

Reflecting on the Readings with the children

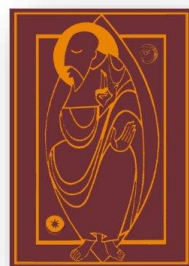
Before Sunday read over the suggested discussion points given in the Leader's Liturgy Outline.

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

Green cloth, Lectionary, a candle, a loaf of bread



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

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 – Powhiri 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, knowing your love for us, we try to live as we should.
Help us to care for other people as you care for us.

R Amen.

First Reading: 2 Kings 4:42-44

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

Psalms 145 **Response:** You open your hand to feed us, Lord; you answer all our needs.

or Alleluia!

Second Reading: Ephesians 4:1-6

(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

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

Bm G D A G A D

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

Gospel: John 6:1-15

Minister of the Word: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

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 Whakāaro

8-12 year olds:

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. When each has had an opportunity to speak you might begin general discussion by building on to their responses, perhaps using some prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas:*

- Does this story about Jesus remind you of anything from last week's story? (Jesus could see what the people and the apostles needed, Jesus took care of the people. Jesus wanted to take the disciples to a quiet place to be alone)
- What did Jesus see that the people needed? Who did he ask to help him meet the peoples' need? What did they find? What food did the boy share with Jesus? What did Jesus do with the food that the child offered him? Focus on the actions of Jesus in this story – **he took the bread, gave thanks, and shared the bread with everyone** – then he did the same with the fish. Ask the children to name another time when Jesus took bread, blessed it and shared it with everyone – (The story of the Last Supper) How do you think the people felt after eating such special food? What happened to

the food that was left over? What did this miracle make the people want to do? What was Jesus' response?

- Why do you think he wanted to be alone?

The reading from the book of Kings where Elisha feeds a hundred people with a loaf of bread prefigures Jesus feeding the people in today's Gospel story. Together, these stories prefigure the feeding of the Last Supper and the Eucharist. We are part of that same blessing, breaking and giving out which Jesus began over two thousand years ago. It's a record breaking meal!

- Can you think of some ways that we can remember how valuable food is for our health and well-being? Can you think of some good ways that we can be like Elisha and Jesus and share food with those who are hungry?



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

Invite the children to share any prayer that they know can be prayed before we eat.

Finish with the following prayer:

Loving Father,
thank you for feeding us with food for our bodies and our souls,
to make us strong so we can live good, loving lives.

Amen



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: With the readings we have heard today in our hearts let us call upon our loving God for our needs:

- For the Church throughout the world that it will reach out with compassion to all people who suffer. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer

or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That there will be food for the hungry. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer

or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- For lawbreakers. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer

or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- For those in prison. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer

or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God of all, hear the prayers we your children make to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen**

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

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Echo Mime

John 6:1-15

Feeding many people

Note to leaders: either each child or a group of children require three signs (A4 size or smaller) which will be held up as part of the echo mime. The signs should read:

LOTS OF MEN / LOTS OF WOMEN / LOTS OF CHILDREN

A story from John's Gospel	
One day	hand open as in reading a book
many people	Hold up one finger, palm facing outwards
followed Jesus	Point to your group
and followed him	Walking on the spot
and followed him.	Walking on the spot faster
There were lots and lots of people everywhere!	Walking on the spot faster still
Men	Point to all children in the group
and women	Make large circular action with arms
and children	Hold up sign that says LOTS OF MEN
and they were hungry!	Hold up sign that says LOTS OF WOMEN
Jesus and the disciples	Hold up sign that says LOTS OF CHILDREN
had no food	Rub stomach
to give the people	Rub stomach
and they were hungry!	Point to children in the group
What will we do?	Shake head
How can we help?	Hand in an open gesture
One of the disciples	Rub stomach
noticed one small boy	Hands in a questioning pose, turn to the left
	Hands in a questioning pose, turn to the right
	Hold up one finger, left hand, palm facing outwards
	Hold up one finger, left hand, palm facing outwards

with some bread

point to one hand open

and some fish

point to right hand open

He took the boy to Jesus

Move hands from side to side

Look Jesus!

Using two fingers point to imaginary boy

Here is some food

point to one hand open

but it is only a small amount.

point to right hand open

Jesus took the food and blessed it

Make sign of the cross

He gave thanks to God

Arms raised

Everyone ate

Hands to mouth

and ate

Hands to mouth

and ate

Hands to mouth

and still

Hold up one finger, palm facing outwards

there was more food left!

Make large circular action

And this is how God loves us!

Point to self



A story from John's Gospel

Hands open as in reading a book



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.