



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Green

'What do you believe about Jesus?'

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15 Psalm 78 John 6:24-29



*After the Israelites had fled from Egypt into the desert,
God took care of his people
and made sure that they did not go hungry.
Jesus tells us it is his life within us
that is the food that keeps us going.*

Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Eighteenth 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 6:24-29

The people saw that Jesus and his disciples had left. Then they got into the boats and went to Capernaum to look for Jesus.

They found him on the west side of the lake and asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you for certain that you are not looking for me because you saw the miracles, but because you ate all the food you wanted.

Don't work for food that spoils. Work for food that gives eternal life. The Son of Man will give you this food, because God the Father has given him the right to do so."

"What exactly does God want us to do?" the people asked.

Jesus answered, "God wants you to have faith in the one he sent."

After the people of Israel had escaped from Egypt and were in the desert, they all started complaining to Moses and Aaron.

They said, "We wish the Lord had killed us in Egypt. When we lived there, we could at least sit down and eat all the bread and meat we wanted. But you have brought us out here in the desert, where we are going to starve to death."

The Lord said to Moses:

"I will send bread down from heaven like rain for all of you. Each day the people can go out and gather up only enough for that day. By doing this, I'll find out if they will obey me.

I have heard my people complain. Now tell them that each evening they will have meat, and each morning they will have more than enough bread. The people will know that I am the Lord their God."

That evening birds came and landed everywhere in the camp. The next morning dew covered the ground. After the dew had gone, there were thin flakes that looked like frost all over the ground. The people had never seen anything like this, and they started asking each other, "What is it?" Moses told them, "This is the food that the Lord has given you."

PSALM

Psalm 78

Response: **The Lord gave them bread from heaven.**
 or Alleluia!

These are things we learned from our ancestors,
 and we won't keep secret the glorious deeds and the mighty miracles of the Lord. **R**

God gave a command to the clouds, and he opened the doors in the skies.
 From heaven he sent grain that they called manna. **R**

He gave them more than enough, and each one of them ate this special food.
 God brought his people to the sacred mountain. **R**

Background to the Readings for Leaders

The Israelites are tempted to make a return to Egypt when hunger forces them to focus on their stomachs – suddenly slavery with good food looks more attractive to them than freedom on a starvation diet. In the same way the people in the Gospel who track Jesus down after being fed on bread and fish till they have had their fill, are looking for physical satisfaction.

The word 'Rabbi' in Hebrew means, 'my great one'. At the time of Jesus it referred to masters or teachers who had a following of disciples who learned from them. There is some debate about the meaning of the term 'the Son of Man' and whether Jesus used this title of himself or whether his disciples used it of him after his death. In the Book of Daniel, it is used as a term for God's final agent of salvation at the end times.

Images from the Readings

- *Food that lasts*
- *Bread from heaven*
- *I am the bread of life*
- *Never hunger, never thirst*

Reflection for Leaders

The people in the desert were concerned about their physical wellbeing, God answered their cries for help, but there is an underlying message – "Believe. Trust in me. Have faith. Stop worrying about yourselves all the time." In the Gospel this message is echoed by Jesus to the crowds who have followed him. Jesus' life within us is the food that keeps us going. Jesus asks that we stay hungry for the bread all our lives and that we bring others to the table to share with us in the supper of the Lord.

What associations, responses, hungers does bread evoke in us? What does it symbolise? Why is food such a powerful sign of dependence on God?

The God who watches over Israel in the desert is the same God who sends Jesus as a source of life into our lives. What must you do to do the work that God wants?

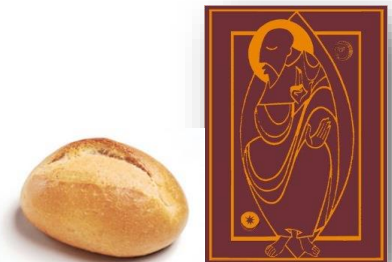
Reflecting on the Readings with the children

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 (Ordinary Time), Lectionary, candle, a bread roll



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

Eighteenth 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 – 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, help us, your children, to come to you so that we will never thirst or be hungry.

R Amen.

First Reading: Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

(if used)

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

Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalm 78

Response: The Lord gave them bread from heaven

or

Alleluia!

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 6:24-29

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 Whakaaro

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:*

- What were the Israelites complaining about to Moses? How did God respond?
Ask the children if they have ever felt hungry and then smelt fresh bread.
- Why do you think Jesus calls himself “bread”?
Jesus knows that the bread we eat each day is important to keep us strong and healthy, but he tells the people that he is offering much more than ordinary bread. He is offering them himself – the Bread of Life. There are more kinds of hunger than just hunger for food.
- Can you think of other ways we can be hungry?
- What does the expression ‘food for thought’ mean?

Jesus knows that we need to have his life within us so that we can be truly happy. Try to get the children to understand that when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist we are nourished and given the strength to follow him and live as he lives. Although it looks and tastes and is bread, it is also our spiritual food, the body of Christ.

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

Use the bread as a focus for prayer.

Sing a Eucharistic hymn (e.g. 'Jesus You Are Bread For Us' (As One Voice Vol.1. No. 42) or 'I Am the Bread of Life', verse 1 (AOV1. No. 49) and ask the children to pray for each other that we will recognise the real food that Jesus offers us.



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.

BELIEVE. TRUST IN ME.



HAVE FAITH

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: In faith and love, let us pray to our loving God for our needs:

- For the Church that provides for the needs of all people.
R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For spiritual food to feed those who are without hope.
R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For leaders in Aotearoa-New Zealand, may they put the needs of others before their own.
R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That we will not hurt others by our selfishness.
R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: Loving God be gracious and hear the prayers that we, your children, make to you, we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord

All: Amen

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

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Liquid Pictures

John 6:24-20

What do you believe about Jesus?

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: What do you believe about Jesus?

I believe Jesus was kind.

I believe Jesus welcomed people.

I believe Jesus cured the sick.

I believe Jesus listened to people.

I believe ... (insert children's ideas)

I believe ...

I believe ...

I believe ...

Leader: Have faith and believe in Jesus!

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.