



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Green

'God's Words are Spirit and Life'

Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 Luke 4:14-21

Jesus announces his mission to the people of Nazareth by quoting the prophet Isaiah. Jesus was always faithful in worship and reading Scripture. We also treat our book of Scripture with reverence and respect. We have a special place for it beside a lighted candle, we process with it, the priest kisses the book and handles it with reverence. Just as Jesus did we know it is the Word of God for us today and always.



Leader's Preparation

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

Luke 4:14-21

Jesus returned to Galilee with the power of the Spirit. News about him spread everywhere. He taught in the Jewish meeting places, and everyone praised him.

Jesus went back to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as usual he went to the meeting place on the Sabbath. When he stood up to read from the Scriptures, he was given the book of Isaiah the prophet. He opened it and read,

"The Lord's Spirit has come to me, because he has chosen me to tell the good news to the poor. The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, "This is the year the Lord has chosen.' "

Jesus closed the book, then handed it back to the man in charge and sat down.

Everyone in the meeting place looked straight at Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, "What you have just heard me read has come true today."

All the people came together and stood in the open area in front of the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the teacher to read to them from the Law of Moses that the Lord had given for his people. So on the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest came with the Law and stood before the crowd of men and women. Everyone who was able to understand was there. From early morning till noon Ezra read the Law of Moses aloud in front of the Water Gate. They all listened carefully, as Ezra stood and read from the wooden platform that had been built for him.

The platform was very high, and everyone could see Ezra as he opened the Book of the Law. And when he opened it, they all stood up. Ezra praised the wonderful Lord God, and the people shouted, "Amen! Amen!" They bowed low to the ground and worshipped the Lord.

The men who were on the platform with him translated what he read and explained to the people what it meant.

Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher, and the Levites who had been teaching the people all said, "Don't be sad or cry! This is a special day for the Lord your God." They said this because the people cried when God's Law was read to them.

Nehemiah told the people, "Enjoy your good food and wine and share what you have with everyone who didn't have any to bring. Don't be sad! This is a special day for the Lord, and he will make you happy and strong."

PSALM

Psalm 19

Response: **Your words Lord, are spirit and life**

The Law of the Lord is perfect; it gives us new life.

His teachings last forever, and they give wisdom to ordinary people. **R**

The Lord's instruction is right; it makes our hearts glad.

His commands shine brightly, and they give us light. **R**

Let my words and my thoughts be pleasing to you,

Lord, because you are my mighty rock and my protector. **R**

Background to the Readings for Leaders

Both the first reading and the Gospel today speak of the public proclamation of the scriptures. Nehemiah the governor, and Ezra the priest, played a central role in the restoration of Jerusalem after the return of Israel from exile in Babylon. Ezra had been sent to reconstruct the religious traditions of the people according to the Law of Moses. The public proclamation of the Scriptures once again in the holy city is attended to by the people who are open to listen. The words touch them to their hearts. When Jesus stands to speak to the people of his hometown in the synagogue he must also have been compelling for his audience, especially when he announces himself as the fulfilment of the prophecy. This announcement points to the focus of Jesus' mission to the lowly, the infirm and the marginalized of society. The Acts of the Apostles continues Luke's Gospel which was written so that what had taken place would be remembered.

Of the four Gospels, Luke's is the most explicit and frequent in its reference to the work of the Holy Spirit and Jesus opens his preaching by acknowledging the Spirit.

Images from the Readings

- *Don't be sad or cry!*
- *God's words are spirit and life*
- *Unity - together we are the body of Christ*
- *Jesus taught in the meeting places*
- *Jesus announces his mission*

Reflection for Leaders

The public proclamation of Scripture outlined in our readings today describe a formal liturgy. How does our liturgy of today compare with that of ancient times? How does our response to the Word of God compare with those who listened in those days? Do we recognise that when we listen to scripture being read to us we are listening to God speaking to us through the words we hear? Perhaps we might try to read a passage slowly and reflectively two or three times, allowing time for particular words or phrases to touch us, and spending time with these words. Allow them to connect with our personal situations, relationships, decisions.

Jesus told his listeners that his mission was to bring the good news to the poor, set the captives free, give sight to the blind, and freedom to those who suffer. In what practical way can I bring good news to someone who is going through a tough time today?

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,
(and perhaps a scroll with the words of Isaiah written on it.)



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year 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 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 to remember anyone who is sick or lonely at this time of year. May the joy and peace of Christmas touch their lives.

R Amen.

First Reading: Nehemiah 8:1-4

(if used)

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

Psalm 19

Response: Your words Lord, are spirit and life
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: Luke 4:14-21

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

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.*

- Where was Jesus when this event took place? (The meeting place or synagogue in Nazareth, the town where he grew up) What was he doing there? (Jesus was always faithful to worship wherever he went. He went there to proclaim the scriptures and teach the people)
- How did Jesus do this? (He unrolled the scroll and read from Isaiah. He told the people that God had chosen him and given him the Spirit of the Lord to empower him to fulfil Isaiah’s prophecy)
- Tell the children about the Lectionary with its special text for proclaiming aloud, about how we treat this special book in the Liturgy – how we process with it and have a special place for it in the Church, how we place a lighted candle next to it to remind us that the Word of God is the light for our path. Talk about how the priest kisses the book, and handles it with reverence and respect.



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

Show the children how to sign their forehead, lips and breast with a cross when the Gospel is announced.
Teach them this prayer:

“May the word of God
be in my mind,
on my lips
and
in my heart”



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: In this Year of Mercy let us pray to our loving God for all our needs.

- For the Church, that her leaders and people will be wise and caring
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For all those who need our help will receive it
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That we, the people of Aotearoa New Zealand, will live together in harmony and peace
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For ourselves and our families, that we will always care for each other
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: Ever faithful God, hear the prayers of your children. Bless and protect us, and those for whom we pray, through Jesus Christ our Lord

All: **Amen**

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



The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the
oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's
favour

Isaiah 61:1-2