



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C

'The Pharisee and the tax collector'

Green

Sirach 35:12b-14, 16-17 Psalm 34 2 Timothy 4:6-8 Luke 18:9-14

The story this week is one that Jesus meant for the Pharisees, who thought that they were much better than other people who did not live by the same high standards that they did. They looked down on tax collectors and other people that they considered to be dishonest and sinners. Why do you think the tax collector's prayer was more pleasing to God than the Pharisee's? What is Jesus teaching us about our attitudes and pride this week?



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Thirtieth 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 18:9-14

Jesus told a story to some people who thought they were better than others and who looked down on everyone else:

“Two men went into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

“The Pharisee stood over by himself and prayed, ‘God, I thank you that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful in marriage like other people. And I am really glad that I am not like that tax collector over there. I go without eating for two days a week, and I give you one tenth of all I earn.’

“The tax collector stood off at a distance and did not think he was good enough even to look up toward heaven. He was so sorry for what he had done that he pounded his chest and prayed, “God, have pity on me! I am such a sinner.’ ”

Then Jesus said, "When the two men went home, it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee who was pleasing to God. If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honoured."

FIRST READING

Sirach 35:12-14, 16-17

The Lord doesn't have favourites, and you can't bribe him to cheat the poor. But he hears the prayers of all who have been mistreated. The Lord listens carefully to the prayers of orphans and the concerns of widows.

If you gladly obey God, your prayers will reach beyond the clouds. The prayers of the humble go right through the clouds, and they are never satisfied till their prayers reach God.

PSALM

Psalm 34

Response: **The Lord hears the cry of the poor**

I will always praise the Lord.

With all my heart, I will praise the Lord.

Let all who are helpless listen and be glad. **R**

When his people pray for help,

he listens and he rescues them from their troubles.

The Lord is there to rescue all who are discouraged and have given up hope. **R**

SECOND READING

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Now the time has come for me to die. My life is like a drink offering being poured out on the altar. I have fought well. I finished the race, and I have been faithful.

So a crown will be given to me for pleasing the Lord.

He judges fairly, and on the day of judgment he will give a crown to me and to everyone else who wants him to appear with power.

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

Jesus addressed the parable today to those who thought more highly of themselves than others, who believed that by following their strict life of rules virtuously they would be sure of being acceptable to God. Pharisees were groups of very religious lay people who scrupulously observed the law and met regularly for prayer and fellowship.

Tax collectors were despised in that day because of their widespread corruption. In Israel they carried the double stigma of also being in collusion with gentiles, the occupying Roman rulers, which made them ritually unclean.

Jesus told parables that would connect his hearers with their own stories and knock them out of their complacency. All of us at some stage do and say things which turn us away from God or harm others. The self-congratulatory pride and arrogance shown by the Pharisee is contrasted with the humility of the tax collector who recognised his need for reconciliation with God.

The setting for this story is the Temple in Jerusalem, the most sacred of places to the Jewish people where they could experience the presence of God. The 'holy of holies' at its centre could only be entered one day a year by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. Christian churches today are designed as meeting places to house the assembly of the people of God.

Images from the Readings

- *Thought they were better than others*
- *I am not greedy ...*
- *Have pity on me!*
- *Prayers of the humble reach God*
- *Finished the race*

Reflection for Leaders

Are there ways that you consider yourself better than others?

Impatience in queues can indicate an attitude of superiority. Recall some times when you have felt judged and also perhaps times that you have judged others.

Our self-centred human condition causes us to turn from God. The place where we are able to connect again with God is in the humble recognition of our need for God's forgiving and restoring love.

What are some places where you experience the presence of God most profoundly?

Where do you experience forgiveness and restoration?

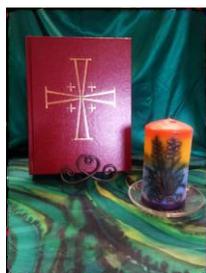
During this week you could make an effort to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation or go to your holy place and pray in the spirit of the tax collector, "God be merciful to me, a sinner".

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, candle.

LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

Thirtieth 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, we know that you have great love for us. Help us to admit our mistakes and turn to your love and forgiveness.

R Amen.

First Reading: Sirach 35:12-14, 16-17

(if used)

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

Psalms 34

Response: The Lord hears the cry of the poor
or Alleluia

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8

(if used)

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



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 18:9-14

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.

- What does boasting mean? (bragging, showing off, skiting)
- How do people behave when they are boasting?
- How do you feel when you have to listen to someone who boasts all the time? Can you believe what they say? Is it good to be around them?
- Jesus told this story of a tax collector and a Pharisee. Tax collectors collected money for the Roman rulers, they often became rich because they cheated people. Most people despised them. Can you think of any other tax collectors that Jesus knew or became friends with? (the apostle Matthew – sometimes called Levi - and Zacchaeus)
- Pharisees were holy people who kept lots of rules and laws and expected everyone else to keep them too. Did they impress Jesus? What do you think is wrong with the first prayer, and what is better about the second?
- Which of the men in this story pleased God? How do you know?
- What are the things that really matter to God?
- Can you think of any situations in your own life like this? Is it difficult to stop finding fault with other people?

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 kneel and pray a sorry prayer, like:

*“Lord, forgive me
because I often do and say things that are wrong
and hurt other people.”*

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: Strengthened by Jesus’ teaching and filled with faith and confidence, let us bring our needs to God:

- For the Church, that the prayers of all God’s family around the world be united as one voice ... Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For a spirit of humility, seeing our worth in God’s eyes not our own ...
Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For the people in our families, our schools, our community, that the choices they make will be pleasing to God ... Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That people who are excluded or different from the norm are not made victims of prejudice and judgment ... Let us pray to the Lord
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: Merciful God, bless 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.