



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

The Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, Year A,B,C

White

To do God's will

Luke 2:16-21, Psalm 67, Numbers 6:22-27

We are still in the midst of Christmas Time, and today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. One of the most outstanding characteristics of Mary is her willingness to know and do God's will. While we would like to follow her example, we wonder how she was so sure of it. Today's Gospel gives a clue. She reflected on events that happened and were happening. She meditated. In our busy lives today, we often overlook meditation as a prayer.



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, 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 2:16-21

They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay.

When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. Everyone listened and was surprised. But Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant.

As the shepherds returned to their sheep, they were praising God and saying wonderful things about him. Everything they had seen and heard was just as the angel had said.

Eight days later Jesus' parents did for him what the Law of Moses commands. And they named him Jesus, just as the angel had told Mary when he promised she would have a baby.

FIRST READING

Numbers 6:22-27

The Lord told Moses, "When Aaron and his sons bless the people of Israel, they must say: pray that the LORD will bless and protect you, and that he will show you mercy and kindness. May the LORD be good to you and give you peace."

Then the Lord said, "If Aaron and his sons ask me to bless the Israelites, I will give them my blessing."

PSALM

Psalm 67

Response: **May God bless us in his mercy.**

Our God, be kind and bless us!

Be pleased and smile.

Then everyone on earth will learn to follow you,
and all nations will see your power to save us. **R**

Make everyone praise you and shout your praises.

Pray for his blessings to continue

and for everyone on earth to worship our God. **R**

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

The well-known verses from Numbers are familiar to us. Sometimes called the Aaronic or Priestly blessing, these beautiful words extend God's blessing to all the people – God's favour and grace, protection and peace. There is a progression from the material to the spiritual. Peace which is more than just the absence of war – summing up all God's good gifts it includes health, joy, prosperity and salvation. The Psalm was used as harvest thanksgiving and echoes the words of the first reading, recognising how dependent we are on God. It closes on the note that all people on earth will come to know God. The gospel brings the Christmas message from the babe back to the mother. The reaction of the shepherds is an awesome wonderment, and Mary reflects on all the events.

Images from the Readings

- *Hurried off and found them*
- *Mary kept thinking*
- *Just as the angel had said*
- *They named him Jesus*
- *Blessing*

Reflection for Leaders

The church celebrates Mary's maternity, Mary as Theotokos – God-bearer. It is thanks to her that Jesus is fully human. Mary is the bringer of Christ to all with whom she comes in contact. In what ways are you, like Mary, also a 'God-bearer' to others? How might you become more so? Mary spent time reflecting, pondering and thinking. In our busy world making time for reflection is a difficult ask, but building reflection time into our daily routine can be a valuable exercise. Reflect on ways you can make peace a reality in your situation. Think of a recent time when you received a blessing. How did it feel? During this week look for opportunities to reach out to someone with a blessing.

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. Join with the younger group for the 'Liturgical Action'.

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, a candle, a statue or picture of Mary, a rose



LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

The Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, Year A, B, 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, you love us and ask us to be obedient and trust you.
Help us to do your will even when it is hard and we are afraid,
just as Mary did.

R Amen.

First Reading: Numbers 6:22-27

(if used)

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

Psalms 67 (if used)

Response: May God bless us in his mercy

D
G
Bm
A
D
G
Asus⁴
A

Christmas: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. I bring you news of great joy.

Bm
G
D
A
G
A
D

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Je - sus our Sav - iour is born.

Gospel: Luke 2:16-21

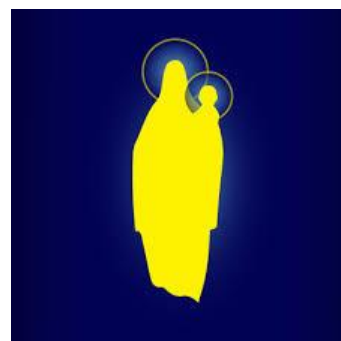
Minister of the Word: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke
Children: **Glory to you, O Lord / Korōria ki ā koe, e te Ariki**

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 children 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.*

- Do you know who Mary was? (Mother of Jesus)
 - What sort of things would you expect a mother to do? Would Mary have had to do these sort of things? Would she have to change nappies, wash, cook and sew?
 - What are the more important things for a mother to do than just doing all those chores? (to love and care for their children, kiss hurts better, talk to them and listen to them, teach them prayers and manners and how to behave, etc)
 - There is another thing that Mums and Dads have to do for their children. Do you know what it is? (name their children)
 - When it was time to name Jesus, Mary and Joseph did this. The angel had told them his name when he told Mary that she would have a baby.
 - How did the shepherds know about the baby? (angels told them)
 - Why do you think there were so many angels around then?
 - Why do you think Mary was so special?
1. She said 'yes' to God when asked to be the Mother of his Son
 2. She knew Jesus better than anyone else ever



3. She always did what God wanted
4. Jesus gave Mary to us as our heavenly mother

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

Both older and younger children come together for the Liturgical Action.

Pray the Hail Mary together, explaining to the children that the first part of the prayer comes from the Christmas story, and the second part is a prayer for the Church. When we pray this we ask Mary to pray for us.

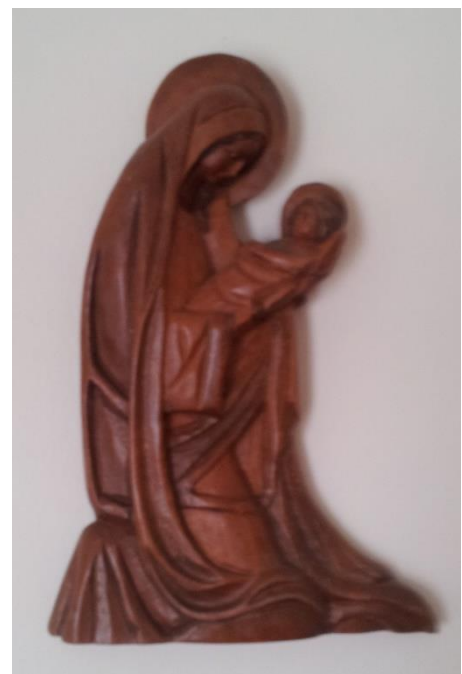
'Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with you.

Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. 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: As Mary trusted God for all her needs, let us now turn to God in prayer:

- That the Church will take every chance to bring justice and mercy in the world
Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That we will bring God to all those we meet. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- For peace throughout the world this new year. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That people who do not know the gift of Jesus to the world will know true peace in their hearts. Let us pray to the Lord

R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God of blessing, let your face shine on us and all those we pray for today. We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son.

All: Amen.

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