



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year A

White

'I am the way, the truth, and the life!'

Acts 6:1-7a, Ps 145, John 14:1-12

Jesus is preparing to leave the disciples. He will still be with them in a special way, through the presence of the Holy Spirit. He knows that it is difficult to believe in what you cannot see. This will really give the disciples an opportunity to have faith. Following Jesus' teachings will enable the disciples to go to Heaven, where Jesus has prepared a place for them. We too are called into this discipleship. May we follow his mission. This is a joyful message of faith, love and hope.



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Fifth Sunday of Easter, 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 14:1-12

Jesus said to his disciples,
"Don't be worried!
Have faith in God and have faith in me.
There are many rooms in my Father's house.
I wouldn't tell you this, unless it was true.
I am going there to prepare a place for each of you.
After I have done this, I will come back and take you with me.
Then we will be together. You know the way to where I am going."
Thomas said, "Lord, we don't even know where you are going! How can we know the way?"
"I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered.
"Without me, no one can go to the Father.
If you had known me,
You would have known the Father.
But from now on, you do know him,
And you have seen him."
Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father. That is all we need."
Jesus replied:

“Philip, I have been with you for a long time. Don’t you know who I am?
If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. How can you ask me to show you the Father?
Don’t you believe that I am one with the Father and that the Father is one with me?
What I say is not said on my own. The Father who lives in me does these things.
“Have faith in me when I say that the Father is one with me and that I am one with the
Father. Or else have faith in me simply because of the things I do.”
“I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing.
You will do even greater things, Now that I am going back to the Father.”

FIRST READING

Acts 6:1-7a

A lot of people were becoming followers of the Lord. But some of the ones who spoke Greek started complaining about the ones who spoke Aramaic. They complained that the Greek-speaking widows were not given their share when the food supplies were handed out each day.

The twelve apostles called the whole group of followers together and said, “We should not give up preaching God’s message in order to serve at tables.

My friends, choose seven men who are respected and wise and filled with God’s Spirit. We will put them in charge of these things. We can spend our time praying and serving God by preaching.”

This suggestion pleased everyone, and they began by choosing Stephen. He had great faith and was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Then they chose Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and also Nicolaus, who worshiped with the Jewish people in Antioch. These men were brought to the apostles. Then the apostles prayed and placed their hands on the men to show that they had been chosen to do this work. God’s message spread and many more people in Jerusalem became followers.

PSALM

Psalms 145

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

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**

Our LORD, everything you do
Is kind and thoughtful,
And you are near to everyone
Whose prayers are sincere. **R**

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

This is a time of transition for the followers of Jesus and today's gospel depicts Jesus giving final instructions to his friends. He does this so that they can continue to take part in God's mission. Jesus is preparing his friends for the time that he will no longer be with them. Once he has gone, they will be expected to carry on the responsibility of continuing the work that he leaves. Their fear and uncertainty is echoed in the confused questions that they ask him. But Jesus soothes their fears and explains that he is both the map and the destination. The first reading implies that once issues have been satisfactorily resolved the opportunity for growth is restored.

Images from the Readings

- *Don't be worried!*
- *A place for each of you*
- *I am the way, the truth and the life!*
- *I am one with the Father*
- *Sharing food each day*
- *Filled with the Holy Spirit*

Reflection for Leaders

Jesus understands how lost his friends will feel when he leaves them, and spends some time reassuring them that he was preparing a place for them to join him. What are the special places for you? Do you have a particular place where you find it easiest to experience the presence of God in your life? Jesus' instructions were for his friends of that day, but they are just as relevant for us today and the outcome is also true – Jesus empowers us to do great things in service. Do you have a sense of being specially chosen to do God's work? Perhaps in a particular ministry? This is mission! We often think about mission work in relation to those missionaries serving overseas. However, we are all called to be on mission in our everyday lives, here and now, even in our conversations and daily actions. We may not see the fruits of the service and mission that we live. Spend time during the week actively looking to Jesus to relieve you of any fears that you have about the future.

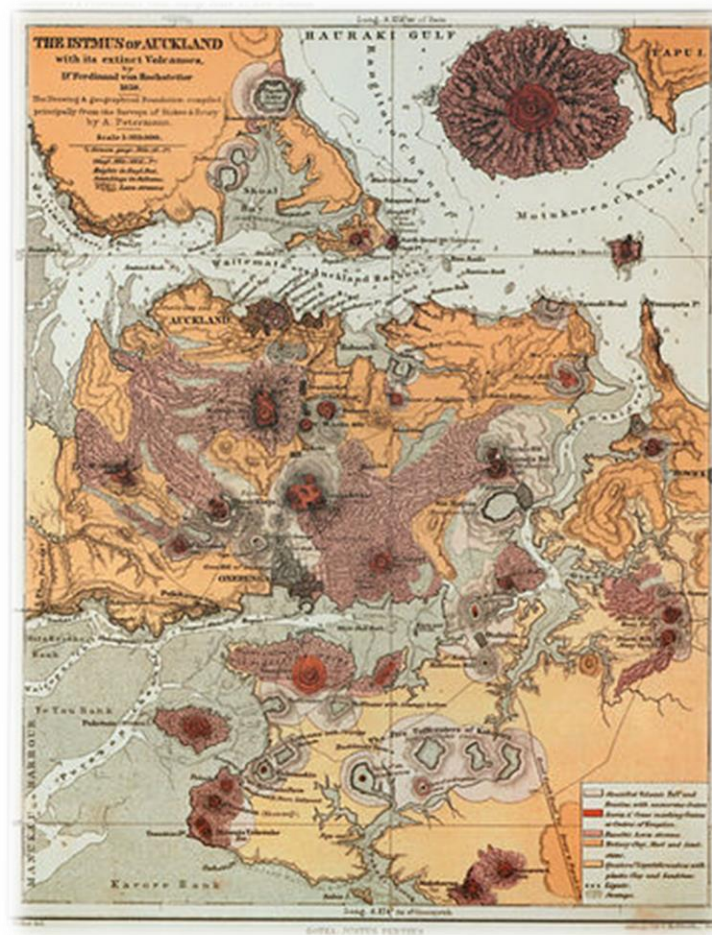
Reflecting on the Readings with the children

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:
White cloth, Lectionary, a candle, a map



Leader's Liturgy Outline

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year A

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 are always fair and good. Teach us your ways so that we may know you better and grow more like you each day.

R Amen.

First Reading: Acts 6:1-7a The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki
Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalm 145

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

Easter: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Je - sus is ri - sen from death.

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. He is the light of the world.

Gospel: John 14:1-12

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 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.*

- Has anyone ever told you that you look like you Mum or you Dad, or that there is a ‘family likeness’ with the people in your family? Jesus tells us today that we don’t need to wonder what God is like any more – anyone who knows him also knows God because Jesus is just like his Father. Jesus came to show us how much God loves us. How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them he was going away?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he said he was going to his Father’s house? (Heaven)
- What was Jesus planning to do in heaven? (Prepare a place for his friends)
- If you weren’t quite sure how to get to some place you wanted to go to, what might you use to help show you the way? (a map) Jesus knew that there was no map to show people how to get to heaven. People who want to live with God in heaven need to follow the way that Jesus lives.
- What are some of the ways that Jesus has shown us to live?
- Did you know that we are all called to be on mission, here and now? We do not have to go overseas to do missionary work. How do you think that we can follow Jesus today and take part in his mission?

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 with each other something special they can do today, something that is following the pathway that Jesus would like us to follow; something that shows that they are on mission.

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 Īnoīnga 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: Placing our trust in the great love that God has for us, let us bring our prayers to the Father of Jesus:

- That our Church will always be faithful and lead us to God
Let us pray to the Lord **R Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- For the spirit of acceptance between everyone
Let us pray to the Lord **R Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- For us to be on mission doing God's work everyday
Let us pray to the Lord **R** **Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For our loved ones who have died, that they may be rejoicing in eternal life in Heaven
Let us pray to the Lord **R** **Lord hear our prayer**
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God who calls us to new life, listen to the prayers we bring to you through Jesus Christ our Lord

All: **Amen**

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