



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

'God is patient and good'

Green

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19 Psalm 86 Romans 8:26-27 Matthew 13:24-30

Have you ever helped weed the garden? Why does no one like weeds? Today Jesus tells us another parable and wants us to think about what will happen at the end of time to those people who do not listen to him. Like the wheat and the weeds in our reading today, God allows good and bad people to live side by side. God wants to allow bad people a chance to change their ways before the end of time.



Leader's Preparation

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

Matthew 13:24-30

Jesus told his disciples this story: "The kingdom of heaven is like what happened when a farmer scattered good seed in a field. But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and scattered weed seeds in the field and then left. When the plants came up and began to ripen, the farmer's servants could see the weeds.

"The servants came and asked, 'Sir, didn't you scatter good seed in your field? Where did these weeds come from?'

'An enemy did this,' he replied

"His servants then asked, 'Do you want us to go out and pull up the weeds?'

'No!' he answered. 'You might also pull up the wheat. Leave the weeds alone until harvest time. Then I'll tell my workers to gather the weeds and tie them up and burn them. But I'll have them store the wheat in my barn.' "

FIRST READING

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

There is no God but you, and you care for all of us. You don't have to prove that you judge fairly.

Your strength gives you the power to do right, and because you rule over all, you have pity on everyone.

When someone doubts how strong you are, you show your strength. And you correct everyone who is too proud.

You are a powerful Master. But you judge us with kindness and rule with great mercy, because you have the power to do whatever you want.

By doing such things, you have taught your people that those who do right must also care about others. And you have given your children a wonderful hope by helping them turn from sin.



PSALM

Psalm 86

Response: Lord, you are good and forgiving.

You willingly forgive, and your love is always there for those who pray for you.

Please listen, Lord! Answer my prayer for help. **R**

You, the Lord God, are kind and merciful.

You don't easily get angry, and your love can always be trusted.

Look on me with kindness.

Make me strong and save me. **R**

SECOND READING

Romans 8:26-27

Brothers and sisters: In certain ways we are weak, but the Spirit is here to help us. For example, when we don't know what to pray for, the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words. All of our thoughts are known to God. He can understand what is in the mind of the Spirit, as the Spirit prays for God's people.

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

The book of Wisdom personifies the quality and nature of wisdom: it is more than just the quality of being wise – she is in fact a personification flowing out from God. Today's reading looks at God's patience and tolerance with Israel giving this community the example that it needs to follow God's own attributes. Reverence for the holiness of God encouraged the people of Israel to never even pronounce the Name of God, so when Matthew writes he characteristically refers to the Kingdom of Heaven rather than the Kingdom of God. His Gospel this week continues the string of parables included in this chapter. The weeds that have come up with the wheat refers to an annual grass called darnel, which looks very much like wheat when it first shoots. The information is given that the farmer has indeed sown good seed, and that it is a conspiracy by the enemy which has spoilt the expected harvest. By choosing to allow both wheat and weeds to grow to maturity until they are separated at harvest, a picture is painted of a God who allows us every chance of reaching our fullest potential and changing that in us which is bad or imperfect. However the promise for the bad is clear – at the harvest they will be burnt.

Images from the Readings

- While everyone was sleeping
- Good seed and weeds
- Let both grow together
- Care about others
- The Spirit prays for us

Reflection for Leaders

The connection between good and evil is inherent in each of us. It can be hard for us when we are forced to face the imperfections in ourselves, and realise that we are not quite as good or perfect as we would like to believe ourselves. Often it can be harder to accept the faults in ourselves than in other people, but today's message is that we must learn to be patient as we grow in spiritual maturity. Identify some good and some bad aspects of your character. How do you deal with the parts of yourself of which you are ashamed or don't like? What concrete way can you see to weed these out of your character?

Can you see any signs of the kingdom in yourself? What about in your community or the world? This week concentrate on one thing you can do to make the kingdom come a little closer in your community / parish.

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, a big weed (ie dandelion)



LEADER'S Liturgy Outline

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 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, our lives are a mixture of good and bad. Help us to know the difference so that we can do what pleases you

R Amen.

First Reading: Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

(if used)

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

Psalm 86 **Response:** Lord, you are good and forgiving.

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-27

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

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: Matthew 13:24-30

Minister of the Word: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
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.*

- Have you ever helped weed the garden? What is a weed, and why does no-one like them?
- How could you tell which plants were good and which ones were weeds? Did someone show you which ones to pull out?
- What did Jesus mean when he talked about the wheat and the weeds? (God allows good and bad people to live beside each other. They will be separated at the end of time)
- Why did the farmer tell his servants not to pull out the weeds until the harvest? (he didn't want to risk losing any of the good seed)



- What does this tell us about people? (inside each of us is good and bad, but Jesus wants us to change the bad parts)
- What does this tell us about God? (God is patient and good and allows people every chance to change their lives around)
- When is a good time to sort out what is good and what is bad in our lives?

5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material or use the 'Liquid Picture' on page 9, and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'

LITURGICAL ACTION – Ko te Ritenga Karakia

Teach the children a simple sorry prayer, such as:

Lord, we are sorry for the times we make mistakes
and do wrong things.

Help us to be good
and remember what you have taught us.

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 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: Jesus has told us to ask God for what we need, so as God's children we pray:

- That our Church be a place that encourages us to give each other another chance
Let us pray to the Lord ℟ Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That we learn to be patient with ourselves when we make mistakes, so that we can also be patient with each other
Let us pray to the Lord ℟ Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That we allow God's Spirit to help us and pray for us
Let us pray to the Lord ℟ Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For courage for those who need to change their lives around
Let us pray to the Lord ℟ Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God of patience and mercy, accept the prayers that we make with confidence through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

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

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Liquid Picture

Matthew 13:24-30

Parable of the weeds

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: The Kingdom of heaven is like this ...

Seeds, good seeds everywhere!

Uh-oh bad seeds, everywhere!

Dig out the weeds!

No! Leave the weeds to grow with the wheat.

At harvest time, separate them.

Leader: Only God can judge the good and the bad.

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.