



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Green

'Who are you Jesus?'

Romans 11:33-36, Psalm 138, Matthew 16:13-20

Because of the miracles that Jesus performed, and the way that he taught the crowds, the people knew that Jesus was a very special person. They thought that he was a prophet – a person who brought God's message to them. Jesus wanted to know who his special group of friends thought he really was. Only Peter was able to give the answer, and this was how Jesus knew that he was to lead the Church. Who leads the Church today? What do we believe about Jesus? Do people today understand who Jesus really is? If Jesus asked you this question, what would you answer?



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration, begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Twenty-First 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 16:13-20

When Jesus and his disciples were near the town of Caesarea Philippi, he asked them, "What do people say about the Son of Man?"

The disciples answered, "Some people say you are John the Baptist or maybe Elijah or Jeremiah or some other prophet."

Then Jesus asked them, "But who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter spoke up, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Jesus told him: "Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed! You didn't discover this on your own. It was shown to you by my Father in heaven. So I will call you Peter, which means 'a rock.' On this rock I will build my Church, and death itself will not have any power over it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and God in heaven will allow whatever you allow on earth. But he will not allow anything that you don't allow."

Jesus told his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Brothers and sisters: who can measure the wealth and wisdom and knowledge of God? Who can understand his decisions or explain what he does?

“Has anyone ever known the thoughts of the Lord or given him advice? Has anyone loaned something to the Lord that must be repaid?”

Everything comes from the Lord. All things were made because of him and will return to him. Praise the Lord forever! Amen.

Response: Lord, your love is eternal.

With all my heart I praise you, Lord.
In the presence of angels I sing your praises.
I worship at your holy temple.

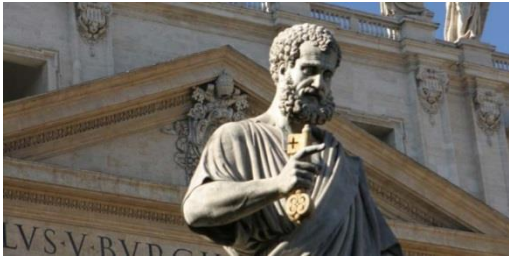
I praise you for your love and your faithfulness.
When I asked for your help,
you answered my prayer and gave me courage.

Though you are above us all, you care for humble people,
and you keep a close watch on everyone who is proud.
Your love never fails. You have made us what we are.
Don't give up on us now!



Background to the Readings for Leaders

It is in our first reading today that Paul comes to a place where he has reached the limit of understanding of God's purposes – and we are led to a place of marvel at the wonder of God. This leads us to our Gospel reading where Jesus is asking the disciples for their view of his identity. Simon Peter gathers the fragments of truth that have been put forward to offer the revelation that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. For this divine insight he is offered a new name – Peter the rock– just as many of the major identities of old had been eg. Abram to Abraham. The authority of the future church was conferred upon his shoulders. Caesarea Philippi was a pagan centre of worship, north of Galilee. Herod the Great had built a white stone temple



there and it later became the capital for his son, Philip. The temple had been built at a natural spring, the source of the River Jordan, and dedicated to the Roman god of nature, Pan. It was at the high rock at the cave of Pan where it is believed Jesus told Peter that he would be the rock on which the Church was to be built, dedicated not to a pagan god but to the one true God.

Images from the Readings

- Son of Man
- The Messiah
- On this rock I will build my Church
- Keys to the kingdom
- Depths of God

Reflection for Leaders

Peter's response to Jesus, like our own, was sometimes strong and positive, and other times faltering and flawed. But he was open to God and so open to receive the fullness of revelation. If we remain open to the gift of faith we are also offered forgiveness when we fail in our journey of faith. When have you experienced the ups and downs of faith in your life? If Jesus were to ask you today 'Who do you say I am?', what would your response be? Jesus speaks of the Church that was being birthed and the authority that was being given to Peter was passed down to successive Popes. This Church is now 2000 years old. How do you think of the Church today? In the places where you have authority, in your home and your workplace, consider the responsibilities of your decisions, and be aware that you make these out of your role as a follower of Jesus.

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 rock and a key



LEADER'S Liturgy Outline

Twenty-First 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, we put our trust in you. We believe that you loved us so much that you sent your only Son. Help us to know you better so that your love shines in our lives.

R Amen.

First Reading: *Romans 11:33-36 (if used)*

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

Psalm 138

Response:

Lord, your love is eternal

(or another suitable response known by the children)

(Second Reading not included this week)

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 16:13-20

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.

- *What did Jesus ask the disciples? He was continually revealing himself to the people around him, and he still does this today.*
- *What did the people of that time think about Jesus? (that he was a prophet)*
- *How do you learn more about Jesus today? (by listening to/reading the Gospel)*
- *We need to know more about who Jesus is for us to be able to answer his question for ourselves. How can you tell if people really know who Jesus is?*
- *What did Jesus think about the answer that Peter gave to the question? (he was pleased - God had shown Peter this)*
- *What happened then? (Jesus changed his name from Simon to Peter, and told him that he would lead the Church)*
- *How do you think Peter might have felt?*
- *Who leads the Church today? (you might like to talk a little about the new Pope, and about your local Bishop)*



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*

Give the children a copy of the Apostle's Creed (ICEL version) to say together

— allow younger children to echo the lines.



(Replaces the 'Profession of Faith' we usually pray with the children)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.
Amen

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL – *Te Inoīnga 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: We know that God loves us, so together let us pray for others and for ourselves:

- That our Church uses the authority given to Peter with compassion and wisdom
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That forgiveness always be a sign that God is present in our lives and in our school communities
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That our faith will help us to be open to God and all God gives us
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That the leaders of our country will look after those who are in need
Let us pray to the Lord R Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God of love, like Peter we come to know you in faith. In that faith we bring to you these prayers for ourselves and others, through Jesus Christ your Son

All: Amen

The children rejoin the assembly before the prayers over the gifts.



Apostles Creed (ICEL translation)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

Amen

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Voice A, Voice B

Matthew 16:13-20

Who do people say I am?

Note to leaders: The reading is simply presented in the format for 2 readers to read. The text is best read in a flow on manner. Suited for use with older children who are good readers.

Voice A: One day, Jesus asked the disciples...

Voice B: Who do people say I am?

Voice A: Who are you Jesus?

Voice B: They all had a different opinion about this.

Voice A: John the Baptist!

Voice B: Elijah!

Voice A: Jeremiah!

Voice B: A great prophet!

Voice A: Who are you Jesus?

Voice B: Who do YOU say I am?

Voice A: Who are you Jesus?

Voice B: The Messiah, that's who you are! The son of the Living God!

Voice A: Are you the Messiah Jesus?

Voice B: Good on you Simon!

Voice A: You are indeed blessed, for you didn't work that out on your own.

Voice B: God must have told you Peter!

Voice A: Jesus said, 'I will call you Peter!'

Voice B: The rock!

Voice A: On this rock I will build my community!

Voice B: Wow Peter, how good is that! You're going to be a leader!



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.