



# *Liturgy of the Word with Children*

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

## *Thirty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A* *Green*

### *'Go out to meet Jesus'*

*Wisdom 6:12-16; Psalm 63; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13*

*It is easy to be ready for something to happen when we know the day and time to expect it. Today Jesus explains that we must always be ready for his return, even though no one knows when he will be coming.*



### *Leader's Preparation*

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Thirty-Second 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 25:1-13

Jesus told his disciples this story about the kingdom of heaven:

"The kingdom of heaven is like what happened one night when ten girls took their oil lamps and went to a wedding to meet the groom. Five of the girls were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps, but no extra oil. The ones who were wise took along extra oil for their lamps.

The groom was late arriving, and the girls became drowsy and fell asleep. Then in the middle of the night someone shouted, 'Here's the groom! Come to meet him!'

When the girls got up and started getting their lamps ready, the foolish ones said to the others, 'Let us have some of your oil! Our lamps are going out.'

The girls who were wise answered, 'There's not enough oil for all of us! Go and buy some for yourselves.'

While the foolish girls were on their way to get some oil, the groom arrived. The girls who were ready went into the wedding, and the doors were closed. Later the other girls returned and shouted, 'Sir, sir! Open the door for us!'

But the groom replied, 'I don't even know you!'

So, my disciples, always be ready! You don't know the day or the time when all this will happen."

## FIRST READING

Wisdom 6:12-16

Wisdom shines brightly, and she is easily seen by all who love her and search for her. Wisdom hurries to meet everyone who wants to be wise. If you get up early and search, you will easily find her at your front door. Keep your mind on Wisdom, and you will be very wise. Keep thinking about her, and all of your worries will soon disappear. Wisdom goes around searching for those who deserve her. She meets them along the road and stays in their thoughts.

## PSALM

Psalm 63

**Response: My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.**

You are my God. I worship you. In my heart, I long for you,  
as I would long for a stream in a scorching desert. **R**

I have seen your power and your glory in the place of worship.  
You love means more than life to me, and so I praise you. **R**

I think about you before I go to sleep, and my thoughts turn to you during the night.  
You have helped me, and I sing happy songs in the shadow of your wings. **R**

## SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

My friends, we want you to understand how it will be for those followers who have already died. Then you won't grieve over them and be like people who don't have any hope. We believe that Jesus died and was raised to life. We also believe that when God brings Jesus back again, he will bring with him all who had faith in Jesus before they died. Our Lord Jesus told us that when he comes, we won't go up to meet him ahead of his followers who have already died. With a loud command and with the shout of the chief angel and a blast of God's trumpet, the Lord will return from heaven. Then those who had faith in Christ before they died will be raised to life. Next, all of us who are still alive will be taken up into the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the sky. From that time on we will all be with the Lord forever. Encourage each other with these words.

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

The book of Wisdom, written about 100 BC, explores the qualities of wisdom, an agent of creation, breath of the power of God. This reading declares how readily Wisdom may be found. In the second reading, Paul speaks of the return of the Lord that was so intensely anticipated by the early church. There was concern among the community that in the interim some of their members had died, and Paul was giving assurance that their fears were unfounded. In doing so he adds to the theology of eternal life.

The theme of the Christ's second coming is echoed in today's Gospel. The public ministry of Jesus is drawing to a close and Matthew exhorts his community to be prepared for this event. Jesus' victory over death through his resurrection had begun something that would be completed only with his return in glory. The parable of the ten bridesmaids paints a word picture that the people would be familiar with as they understood the message 'to be prepared'. The girls slept as they waited for the bridegroom, they all slept. However, five brought additional oil. Had they shared their supply with the five who were not as prepared, then no-one would have had enough to accompany the groom. Oil is traditionally symbolic of the Holy Spirit. This is a clear warning that we each need to be personally ready for Jesus' return, lest the door be closed against us for eternity.

## *Images from the Readings*

- Ten girls took their lamps
- Come to meet him!
- Our lamps are going out
- Always be ready!
- The Lord will return from heaven

## *Reflection for Leaders*

Once again we have the imagery of the wedding banquet to which all are invited. But only those who live with an attitude of openness and readiness will be allowed inside. This parable stresses the need to live in the present with an eye on the future. Recall a time when you have had to invest a lot of time and energy into preparation for an event. Did this effort pay off? Can you also recall an occasion when you have neglected to do preparation that was necessary. What happened, and how did you feel during this occasion? No matter how well we plan, the unexpected will often crop up to throw all our efforts. Sometimes the unexpected can bring better things that we could have imagined. Do you find it easy to deal with the unexpected in your life? How well do you balance the spiritual and the practical aspects of your life? Think about the priorities in your life during this week and evaluate whether they need to be adjusted.

## *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.*

# LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

## Thirty Second 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 know that one day you will send Jesus back to us. Help us to be ready to be with you for all time.

**R** Amen.

*First Reading: Wisdom 6:12-16 (if used)*

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

*Psalms 63*

**Response:** My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God!  
(or another suitable response known by the children)

*Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (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: Matthew 25:1-13

**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 had to be ready for something very important, and then found that you didn't have something that you really needed?
- Maybe you couldn't find your rugby boots, or your dancing shoes, your swimming goggles, or perhaps the batteries in your torch were flat.
- When there were weddings in the time that Jesus lived, the bridegroom would come to the house of the bride's parents and take her to his house where the wedding feast would take place. Often the bridesmaids would go with the groom to collect the bride and then return to the celebrations. They had to have enough oil in their lamps to get to the bride's house and back safely. What do you think Jesus was trying to tell us with this story? (we must always be ready, even when we aren't sure exactly when we need to be.)
- Why were some of the girls foolish and some wise?
- What did Jesus say that the end of the story? (always be ready!)
- What do we need to be ready for? (Jesus will return again)
- How can we keep ourselves ready for when Jesus returns? (Do as Jesus taught us, live each day as well as we can, make it our best).

**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*

Pray with the children:

*God, our Father,  
we pray for all our relatives and friends  
who have died.  
Help them and give them our love  
as we look forward to the time  
when we will all be happy  
together with you forever in heaven.  
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:** We have listened to God's word, and know that we can bring our prayers to our God who loves us.

- That the love and peace of God will fill all those who serve the Church  
Let us pray to the Lord                      R      Lord hear our prayer  
or                      **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That the rulers of our nation, communities and schools will lead with wisdom and readiness  
Let us pray to the Lord                      R      Lord hear our prayer  
or                      **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That the abundant healing of God will come to the sick, and compassion to all those who care for them  
Let us pray to the Lord                      R      Lord hear our prayer  
or                      **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For all those who have died, that the eternal happiness of God will be their treasure for ever  
Let us pray to the Lord                      R      Lord hear our prayer  
or                      **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

**Leader:** Loving God, you invite us to bring all our needs to you. Listen to the prayers of your children, which we bring to you through Jesus Christ your Son

**All:**      **Amen**

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

# Thirty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

## Chorus Play

Parable of the ten bridesmaids

Matthew 25:1-13

**What is a Chorus play?** A Chorus play presents a Scriptural story in the form of a play with both individual characters and a chorus. The chorus aspect allows for whole group participation. One of the aims of chorus plays is to provide not only a presentation of the story but also – and more importantly – an informed interpretation of it. There are many excellent sources of material available today to assist interpretation, especially Biblical commentaries.

**Note to leaders:** The following **chorus play** is appropriate to use with children and young people of **any age**.

**People required:** Readers 1 and 2, 'Foolish' women, 'Wise' women

- Reader 1:** This is a story that helps us understand what the Kingdom is like.
- Reader 2:** One there were ten women who went to a wedding to wait for the bridegroom.
- Reader 1:** They took their oil lamps,
- Chorus:** **And waited and waited for him.**
- Reader 2:** But he didn't arrive on time.
- Reader 1:** It was getting later and later,
- Reader 2:** and the night was becoming darker and darker.
- Chorus:** **And they waited and waited for him.**
- Reader 1:** It became so late that
- Reader 2:** finally they all fell asleep.
- Chorus:** **And they waited and waited for him.**
- Reader 1:** Then, suddenly, in the middle of the night,
- Reader 2:** someone shouted,
- Chorus:** **He's here, he's finally here! Wake up!**
- Reader 1:** The women woke up and lit their oil lamps.
- Reader 2:** Five of the women had brought extra oil.
- Chorus:** **They were okay!**
- Reader 1:** Five of them did not.
- Chorus:** **Uh-oh!**
- Foolish:** Share your oil with us! We do not have enough!
- Wise:** Get your own oil! If we give you ours, we will not have enough.
- Chorus:** **Uh-oh!**



**Reader 2:** The five women with no oil went out in the middle of the night and found some more oil – somewhere!

**Chorus:** **Wow! That's impressive.**

**Reader 1:** But when they returned, the doors were locked and they could not get in.

**Reader 2:** So be ready!

**Chorus:** **Be ready to share with those who have little!**



*From 'Just Imagine 4, Many Creative ways of presenting Scripture' written by Rina Wintour, Mountjoy Enterprises, [www.mountjoyenterprises.com.au](http://www.mountjoyenterprises.com.au). Available from the Liturgy Centre.*