



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Green

'Many people are fed'

Isaiah 55:1-3, Psalm 144, Romans 8:35, 37-39, Matthew 14:13-21

In today's reading, Jesus is able to share a small quantity of food with thousands of people because of the power of God. It is this same power that allows him to share himself with us through the Eucharist - the priest blesses the bread and wine just as Jesus blessed the food at this time. How do you think the disciples felt as they saw this miracle taking place in front of them? Even though they had seen many miracles they didn't cease to be amazed by the power of Jesus, proving once again that he was truly God's Son.



Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Eighteenth 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 14:13-21

After Jesus heard about John, he crossed Lake Galilee to go to some place where he could be alone. But the crowds found out and followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw the large crowd. He felt sorry for them and healed everyone who was sick.

That evening the disciples came to Jesus and said, "This place is like a desert, and it is already late. Let the crowds leave, so they can go to the villages and buy some food."

Jesus replied, "They don't have to leave. Why don't you give them something to eat?" But they said, "We have only five small loaves of bread and two fish."

Jesus asked his disciples to bring the food to him, and he told the crowd to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish. He looked up toward heaven and blessed

the food. Then he broke the bread and handed it to his disciples, and they gave it to the people.

After everyone had eaten all they wanted, Jesus' disciples picked up twelve large baskets of leftovers. There were about five thousand men who ate, not counting the women and children.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:1-3

The Lord says this: If you are thirsty, come and drink water! If you don't have any money, buy food and eat it. Come and buy wine and milk without paying a cent. Why waste your money on something less than food? Why work hard for something that doesn't satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and you will enjoy the very best foods. Listen carefully! Come to me, and you will live. I will promise you the eternal love and loyalty that I promised David.

PSALM

Psalms 144

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

You are merciful, Lord! You are kind and patient and always loving.
You are good to everyone, and you take care of all your creation.

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.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:35, 37-39

Brothers and sisters: Can anything separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble, suffering and hard times, or hunger and nakedness, or danger and death?

In everything we have won more than a victory because of Christ who loves us.

I am sure that nothing can separate us from God's love – not life or death, not angels or spirits, not the present or the future, and not powers above or powers below. Nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord!

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



The reading from Isaiah was written to encourage the people exiled in Babylon. It is an invitation to the Master's banquet through the basic necessities of water, food, wine and milk, where the spirit will be satisfied. It ends with a renewal of the covenantal promise given to David. Prior to the Gospel reading, John the Baptist had publicly denounced the marriage of Herod Antipas and his niece and sister-in-law Herodius. Herod Antipas had him arrested and executed. Jesus is grieved by the news of John's death and so withdraws to a place of solitude with his friends. But already his fame prevents this occurring as the people crowd with their own needs and Jesus' compassion wells up for them.

The gathering eventually needs feeding, and the recounting of this event is the only miracle which is recorded in all four gospels. Jesus is challenging his disciples to take the initiative so that they can be trained as confident leaders after he has gone. It is significant that what is underlined is the concern that Jesus has for the basic physical needs of the people, not just the spiritual. With such meagre provisions the huge crowd is fed with abundance – a foretaste of both the Last Supper and later the Eucharist that was to form such a part of our tradition in the early Church and today.

Images from the Readings

- *A place to be alone*
- *Give them something*
- *leftovers*
- *come to me and you will live*
- *nothing can separate us from God's love*

Reflection for Leaders

Step by step Jesus trained his followers to care for others. His compassion for the crowds took priority over his own need for space and solitude. Can you identify a time when you have been moved by compassion for others? What happened? In the Gospel Jesus takes the limited resources available through his disciples. In our country of plenty, how well do we share our abundance with the rest of humanity? What are the resources that you bring to Jesus for him to bless and share? During this week reflect on the miracle that we encounter in the Eucharist – Jesus takes bread – preparation of bread and wine; Jesus blesses God – Eucharistic prayer of praise and thanksgiving; Jesus breaks bread – fraction rite; Jesus gives bread to be distributed – communion rite. Take some quiet time to look deeply at the special prayers of the liturgy.

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 plate of small rolls



LEADER'S Liturgy Outline

Eighteenth 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 whakataua

Leader: O God, you give us all that we need. Help us to share whatever we have with others, so that we can all have enough. Amen

R Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-3 The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki
(if used) **Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua**

Psalms 144 **Response:** You open your hand to feed us, Lord;
you answer all our needs

Second Reading: Romans 8:35, 37-39
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 14:13-21

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 missed out on something you wanted because someone else ate it all, or got more than you?
- Today Jesus tells us about a time when there wasn't much to share, but when people did they found they had plenty to eat and lots left over. Do you know this story? What is it called? (the miracle of the loaves and fishes)
- What is a miracle?
- Why did Jesus tell his friends to give the crowd food themselves when they didn't have enough? Did they want to do it? Why?
- If one of them had eaten all the bread and fish, what do you think would have happened?
- How much was left over after everyone had eaten?
- What does this tell us about Jesus?
- Can you think of some other time when bread is blessed, broken and shared with others?
- What happens when there isn't enough food in another country to feed the people there? What do you think Jesus wants us to do then?



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

Jesus blessed the bread before he broke it. We too should thank God for our food and bless it:

"Bless us, O Lord,
and these your gifts
which we are about to receive from your goodness.
Through Christ our Lord.
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: Jesus showed us the way to share all that we have. Let us pray for ourselves and others for all that we need:

- That all who are hungry for God can come and be welcomed into our Church family
Let us pray to the Lord **R** Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- That we learn to be thoughtful and generous with each other, sharing what we have even though it seems little
Let us pray to the Lord **R** Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For a sense always of God's gifts to us, all that we need and more
Let us pray to the Lord **R** Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For a special closeness to God for ourselves and all those who struggle or go through hard times
Let us pray to the Lord **R** Lord hear our prayer
or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: God of compassion, you fill our lives with all that we need and even more than that. Hear the prayers of your children as we turn to you in trust, through Jesus Christ your Son

All: Amen

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

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Liquid Picture

Matthew 14:13-21

Many people are fed

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 people followed Jesus all day ...

I'm hungry !

I'm starving !

Who will give me food !

I will !.

Jesus blessed the food !

Leader: There was more than enough food for everyone.



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.