

Children's liturgy – Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Props: cardboard cut-out fish and a net for the fish to go in; pictures of people fishing around the world.

Song suggestions: Here I am, Lord (285, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)
Thuma mina (Send me Lord) (636, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)
Follow me, follow me (175, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Welcome: Today we hear about something special that happened when Jesus went fishing, and how the fishermen left everything to follow him. Let's think a bit about how we can follow Jesus in our lives today...

Opening prayer: God of love, you want the whole world to hear the message of Jesus. Give us the strength and courage to speak up for you and spread the Good News through our words and actions. We make this prayer to you through Christ our Lord, Amen.

First reading (optional): Isaiah 6:1-8

Psalm: Ps 137:1-5, 7-8 r 1

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. Suggestions include: 'Halle, halle, halle' (Caribbean) from 'Sing With the World', Alison Adam & John Bell; 'Alleluia' (Zimbabwe), Abraham Maraire Publications, WCC & GIA; 'Celtic Alleluia' (traditional); 'Alleluia! Raise the Gospel' from 'Go Before Us', Bernadette Farrell, OCP Publications.*

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

Jesus borrows Simon's boat so that he can teach the crowds that are surrounding him on the shore. When he has finished preaching he tells Simon Peter to put out his fishing nets into the water.

Do you remember what Simon says? He does not think they will catch anything, as they haven't caught anything all night.

What happens when Simon Peter and his friends put out the nets? They catch so many fish, and they are so heavy, the boat nearly sinks! How do you think Simon, James and John feel when they see this?

Many people in this country and around the world still make their living from catching fish today. And some people like to fish as a hobby. Do you know anyone who goes fishing – either for work or in their spare time? Have you ever been fishing? What was it like?

In Loyangalani in Kenya, CAFOD's partner the Diocese of Marsabit has supported people who are not very well, and who have no other way of working, by giving them fishing boats and nets. With these, they can make money by selling the fish that they catch. They can also keep some of the fish to eat themselves. This gives them a way to earn money, have a healthier diet, and get the medicine that they need. And so they have more hope for the future.

In Bangladesh, Caritas Bangladesh, another of CAFOD's partners, has lent people money so that they can build their own shrimp farms. Pobitra, one of these people, puts the baby shrimp in his pond and waits for three months until they are big enough to catch and sell.

What do you think about the stories you have heard about fishing around the world?

If you have time at this point you could share the photos in the accompanying photo PowerPoint with the children and ask them what they think is happening in each one.

Jesus tells the disciples they will become fishers of people. What do you think that this means?

At the end of the reading the disciples leave everything behind to follow Jesus. From now on they will spend their time with him, sharing his message with other people. How do you think it must have felt for the disciples to leave all their belongings and all their family and friends behind, to follow Jesus? How do you think their family and friends felt?

How would you feel if you had to leave everyone behind to follow Jesus?

How do you think we can follow Jesus in our lives and share his message of love and good news for all people?

How will you show others that you follow Jesus this week?

Intercessions: *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

We now offer our prayers to God:

We pray for the world's leaders: that they may seek the truth and so bring peace to the world. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people around the world who work catching fish: that they may stay safe while they are out in their boats, and that they may catch enough fish to meet their needs. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may grow in faithfulness and love as true followers of Christ, and that we may show this in our words and in our actions. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Loving God, may we try our best to follow you and serve you more faithfully each day in our words and in how we treat others, especially our brothers and sisters around the world. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration. On the back ask them to write or draw how they will show others that they are followers of Jesus in their actions during the next week.

If you have made cut-out fish you could ask the children to decorate them or colour them in. They could perhaps write or draw how they will show they are followers of Jesus. Or they could draw a picture of one of the people from around the world that they have heard about today, who fishes for a living. Then ask one or several of the children to go round gathering the fish in the net until it is full.

Share the photos of fishing communities around the world with the children and ask them what they think is happening in each one. Discuss the similarities and differences between the photo, the gospel story and their own lives.

Ask the children to share with their family all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try to show how they are followers of Jesus throughout the next week. And when they eat fish to remember all that they have heard and thought about in the session, especially those people around the world who still work to catch fish today.