

Children's liturgy – Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: white

Props: coloured paper or card, colouring pens and pencils

Song suggestions:

May the peace of Christ be with you today (486, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Peace is flowing like a river (595, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Peace, perfect peace (597, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Welcome: In today's gospel Jesus gives the disciples a very special gift – the gift of peace. Let's think some more about peace today.

Opening prayer: God of peace, help us to make our world a peaceful place so that all people can live free from the fear of fighting and wars. We ask this through Christ our Lord and Prince of Peace. Amen.

First reading (optional): Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

Psalm: Psalm 66:2-3, 5-6, 8, r 4

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: John 14:23-29

Gospel reflection: Today Jesus gives his disciples a very special gift. Can you remember what that gift is?

Jesus gives his disciples peace. And he tells his disciples not to be afraid.

Can you think of a time when you were fighting with someone? How did you feel?

Can you remember a time when other people were arguing near you? How did you feel then?

Can you remember a time when you stopped fighting with someone and made friends with them again? Or when the argument near you ended and the people forgave each other? How did that feel?

Ian lives in the Philippines. He is 11 years old. He lives in a place where there is fighting between different groups of people. CAFOD is supporting a project called "Sports for peace" to help the different groups of people living there to understand each other better.

Ian comes to play sports like basketball with children from different groups and faiths. Playing sports is bringing people together and helping to build peace in the community.

The idea is that if children can play peacefully together when they are young, then they will also be able to work or play peacefully together when they are adults.

What do you think of this idea? Do you think it is true?

Ian says, "Playing sports can help us restore peace in our area as we become friendly and more united."

Ian is helping to build peace in his community. Jesus gives us the gift of peace. How can we help to share the gift of peace in our community and around the world?

How will you share the gift of peace this week?

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

It is not always easy to live in peace with others, and so we pray together for God's help:

We pray for world leaders: that they may do all that they can to make the world a peaceful place for everyone to live in. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for Ian and all other people who live where there is fighting or war: that they may learn to forgive each other and live together in peace. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may forgive those who hurt us and do all that we can to share the gift of peace with others. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Living God, may we bring the light of your peace to those we meet. Help us not to get angry or upset with others, but to find a peaceful way to solve our problems, so that the world may be a peaceful place for everyone to live in. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of a gift – the gift of peace – and to write or draw in it one or all of the following things:

- What peace looks like/means to them or the results of peace in a community.
- How they will share the gift of peace over the coming week
- Who they will share the gift of peace with over the coming week

Give the children a gift-shaped piece of paper with the word "peace" written on it. Ask them to write on it who they will share peace with over the coming week and what other things peace might bring with it eg hope, happiness, togetherness etc, so that they can see just what an amazing gift peace is!

Ian attends a peace club which focuses on sport. He plays basketball with other children. Some children around the world attend peace clubs which focus on music or dancing to bring the children together. Ask the children in your group to imagine that they are setting up a new peace club to encourage children from different faiths and backgrounds to come together. What activities would they do? Who would be welcome? What would be the rules of the club?

Ask the children when they go back to their seats, and when they make the sign of peace in Mass, to think about Ian and other children around the world who live in a place where there is lots of fighting, and who hope to build peace in their communities.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about in today's session. Ask them to share their message or prayer for peace with their family during the week.