

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

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: Green

Props: Coloured pens, pencils, paper and five different sized jars to symbolise the alabaster ointment.

Song suggestions: Freely, Freely (209, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Welcome: Today we hear how an uninvited woman seeks out Jesus at a dinner party and Jesus teaches a Pharisee called Simon the real meaning of forgiveness. Let's see what Jesus has to say about how we should treat each other.

Opening prayer: All-forgiving God, open our eyes to see you in all whom we meet. Open our hearts to welcome all people. Open our hands to help all those in distress. Amen.

First reading (optional): Samuel 12:7-10, 13

Psalm: Psalm 31:1-2, 5, 7, 11 r. 5

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 7:36–8:3

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from today's reading?

Jesus is invited to dinner by a Pharisee called Simon. The Pharisees were a group of religious leaders who had great influence at the time of Jesus. They were interested in what Jesus had to say.

All of a sudden, a woman appears with an alabaster jar of ointment and waits behind Jesus as he eats his food. The more she waited, the more she cried and her tears fell on his feet so she wiped them away with her hair, and then kissed his feet and poured the ointment all over them.

Why do you think the woman was crying?

Sometimes when we have said or done something wrong we feel bad or we are embarrassed and we cry and want it all to go away. We long to be forgiven and

for everything to be all right again. What do you think the woman wanted from Jesus as she cried?

The woman wants to make a change in her life and Jesus helps her. Simon doesn't understand why Jesus is being so kind to the woman that he doesn't know. So Jesus explains to Simon by telling him a story about two people in debt. Why do you think Jesus tells this story at this time? What does it mean here?

Simon still doesn't understand Jesus' kindness towards the woman. So what else does Jesus say to Simon about forgiveness?

What can we learn about forgiveness from this story today?

What can we learn about our own words and actions towards other people?

If you could say sorry to one person this week for something you said or did that you didn't mean to - who would it be? Don't say their name out loud but think about them quietly. Make a promise to yourself to say sorry to this person sometime in the coming week. And try very hard not to do whatever it was again.

Jesus tells the woman to "go in peace." No matter where in the world we live we are all called to live peacefully with each other. What does it mean to live peacefully together?

Does it matter whether we know people or they are strangers if we want to live peacefully together? Why?

How will you live this gospel out in the coming week? Can you do one thing in the coming week to show that you are trying to live peacefully with others?

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

We know that God forgives us when we say we are sorry so we pray together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may work to bring forgiveness and peace to all people. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all those people who are at war (*you could name one or two countries that are in the news at this time*) and where fighting destroys many families: that they may know peace. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may say sorry to anyone we have upset and try hard to live as Jesus asks of us. Lord in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of forgiveness, come to us today and renew our hearts so that we may see everyone we meet with your eyes, and welcome them with open hands. Amen.

Activity suggestions:

Ask the children to colour in the five alabaster jars of ointment and to write on each one a different way that they can try to live peacefully with others in the coming week.

Get five glass jars and ask the children to write on one or more pieces of paper both words and actions to describe forgiveness and peace, or the names of people they want to say sorry to. Fold them up tightly so everyone can put at least one piece of paper in one or two of the jars. These can be offered up at the end with the closing prayer or brought back into the main church during the offertory.

Share the pictures of children around the world available [here](#), with the children. Ask the children to think about which of the pictures they like best and why. Ask them to explain what they think the pictures say about living peacefully with each other.

Ask the children to think of some of the ways they as children can teach adults to be forgiving and live peacefully. Then ask them to make a list or act out ways of being forgiving and peaceful to each other.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try to say sorry to anyone they have hurt or upset, and to try to forgive those who have upset them, who are ready to make a change to their lives. Ask them to try to do one thing in the coming week to show that they are living peacefully with others and that they are living out this gospel.