

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

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: Green

Props: Coloured pens and pencils. A big cross or picture of the cross for all to see.

Song suggestions:

My Jesus, my Saviour (895, *Celebration Hymnal for Everyone*)

Welcome: Today we hear how Jesus asks his disciples who they think he is and how Peter says that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Let's think about how we also know who Jesus is and why our faith is so important to us.

Opening prayer: God of all truth, may we know you and your Son as our Saviour Jesus Christ. Help us to grow in our faith and to show that faith in all that we do. Amen.

First reading (optional): Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1

Psalm: Psalm 62:2-6, 8-9, R. v.2

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 9:18-24

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

Jesus had been praying alone when his disciples came to him. Why do you think they wanted to interrupt him during his prayer time?

Do you ever want to be quiet and in a place where you are alone? What does it feel like? Can you speak to God in this silence?

Jesus asks the disciples who the crowds think he is. What do they reply?

Then Jesus asks them who they think he is? Why do you think he asks this question? Who replies? What does he say?

When Jesus asks the disciples directly, it's because they have chosen to follow him, and spent the most time with him - they should know him better than anyone else.

So Peter, by saying that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is telling the other disciples that Jesus is very important. He's saying that Jesus is our saviour.

Jesus wants the disciples to know who he really is so that they can go on to tell others. They need to know him properly themselves. This is just like the way we get to know special people to us - family and friends - we spend time with them, we share news and stories and we tell other people about them. We have a good relationship with them.

The disciples shared what they knew about Jesus and spread this news wherever they travelled so that other people could also believe. They shared stories of Jesus and of how he asks us to behave.

If you have time share Eric's story with the children. See the activity suggestions for more details. There is a photo of Eric in the accompanying Photo PowerPoint which you can also share with the children.

If Jesus sat with us today, right here and said: "Who do you say that I am?" What would you say to Jesus?

What does this gospel story ask us to do? Jesus asks us to pick up our crosses and follow him. What do you think this means?

What does having faith in Jesus as the Son of God mean to you?

Thinking about what Jesus asks of us and what Eric says, how will you act towards others this week at home and school?

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

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the chosen one, so we pray together:

We pray for the Church: that it may be a sign of our faith in Jesus Christ and that through our actions we may be Christ to others, here and around the world. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all people in our parish and schools: that they may be inspired by God to show Christ's love in all that they do, teach and say. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for our families and friends: that we may make time for each other and try to have peaceful relationships. Lord in your mercy...

Closing prayer: You called us Jesus, to follow you all the days of our lives. May we know that you are there for us, whatever happens. And that you will guide us home, just as you returned home to your Father in Heaven. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of a cross and to write their name on it so that they can take up their cross and follow Christ. On the back ask them to write or draw how they will work together to be united as we all come from one God.

Give the children cross-shaped pieces of paper. Ask them to decorate them and to write their names on them. Then either join all the crosses together with sellotape so that everyone sees that we are all joined together in faith. Or, make a large cross-shape out of all the smaller crosses so that everyone can see all the names on each cross, and how together, they become the bigger cross of Christ.

Share Eric's story with the children (*See below*). When you have finished ask all the children to say out loud his words: "**Children should love one another, work together and be united because we all come from one God**".

Then ask the children to discuss how they can do this in their own school this coming week. They may like to write a prayer with Eric's words which they can share out loud or can take home to say with their family later.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. If they have written a prayer ask them to say it at home during the week. Ask them to do one thing in the coming week to show that they are trying to live out the gospel and to follow Jesus in all that they say and do.

Eric's story

It's 6am, and eight-year-old Eric is just waking up. He jumps out of the small bed he shares with his older sister Julienne, and grabs his homework book that has been placed neatly by the bedside the night before. "I always do my homework in the evening," he says. "But I like to look at it again in the morning to check that it's right."

The house that Eric shares with his seven brothers and sisters near Kigali in Rwanda is small, but everything has its place. In the bedroom where he sleeps, books are stacked in boxes next to piles of clothes and shoes.

When Eric's parents died, his older sister Julienne was the only one who could look after the family. Eric thinks of her as his mother, but Julienne has struggled to earn enough money to put food on the table. Now, thanks to help from CAFOD's partners, Julienne has joined with other young people from her village to grow crops to sell. "I grow crops for us to eat," explains Julienne, "but I still worry about not having enough food for everyone."

There are lots of children in Rwanda, like Eric and Julienne, who have been left to fend for themselves. But by coming together with children in the same situation, they can become stronger and make a better life for themselves.

"Children should love one another, work together and be united because we all come from one God," says Eric.

Eric believes that by sharing with others we can make the world a better place.