

Children's liturgy – Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: green

Song suggestions: Make me a channel of your peace (478, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Welcome: Today we hear about how Jesus went onto a mountain and taught his disciples. Jesus told them about the kind of person that makes him happy and who is blessed. Some of what he said might be surprising, so let's think about it together today.

Opening prayer: God of love, you bless those people who are poor, who are sad, who are hungry and thirsty and who are hurt because they stand up for what they believe in. Help us to follow in your way. Amen.

First reading (optional): Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

Psalm: Ps 145:7-10 r. Matt 5:3

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: Matthew 5:1-12a

Gospel reflection: What do you remember about the reading today?

Jesus teaches his disciples about the way he would like people to be treated and how he sees some types of people as extra special or blessed.

What kinds of people did Jesus say are blessed? And what will happen to them? (Eg those who mourn will be comforted. Those who are hungry will have their fill.) When will this happen? Will this only happen in heaven or could it happen here on earth as well?

We are all part of one global family and we are called by God to care for the other members of that family, wherever they are in the world. We can help Jesus' words to come alive today.

What could you do for someone who is sad?

What could you do for someone who is hungry or thirsty?

What could you do for people who are poor?

What could you do for someone who is afraid to stand up for what they believe in?

By doing all those things we will be truly following Jesus. We can help to make the words that he spoke to his disciples on the mountain a reality.

What will you do this week to help Jesus' words come alive?

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

The words of Jesus give us hope for a fairer world and so together we pray:

We pray for world leaders: that they may work to bring about a world that is like Jesus' teachings, a world which is fair and where everyone has enough to live. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are sad, hungry, poor or in danger: that through our actions they may be blessed on earth as well as in heaven and have hope for a better future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may work together with others to follow Jesus' word, bringing comfort to those who are sad and helping make sure all people have enough to eat. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of mercy, open our hearts to listen to what Jesus tells us. Help us to reach out to others who are poor, sad or frightened and try to make their lives blessed. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to look at the accompanying illustration. One of the children has a full lunchbox and looks very happy. One of the children has not got very much at all in their lunchbox and looks sad and hungry. Ask the children to think about what they have heard today, to colour in the picture and underneath to draw what they would do if they were the child with the full lunchbox.

Ask the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them during the week to do one thing to help someone who is sad, hungry, thirsty, poor or afraid, so that Jesus' words may become a reality.