

Children's liturgy –Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Props: A tray and tea-towel, other symbols of service

Song suggestions: O Lord, all the world belongs to you (847, Laudate)

Welcome: Today Jesus warns us to be careful when we are deciding what sort of people we want to be. We are asked not to be too proud but to help one another.

Opening prayer: God of truth, help us not to be distracted by what is not important. Help us to always listen to Jesus and to follow him. Amen

First reading (optional): Malachi 1:14–2:2. 8-10

Psalm: Psalm 130

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 23:1-12

Gospel reflection: This is quite a difficult gospel and one we will have to think about. Jesus is talking about people who seem to know a lot and think they are very important. Jesus warns his friends that there are some people who always tell others what to do but never listen to their own advice. And, more importantly, who never do anything to help others.

Do you think that there are people like that around now?

Jesus describes people who want others to notice them and do whatever they tell them. But he reminds his friends that we must always listen to God first.

Why might it be wrong to listen to other people telling us what to do?

Jesus reminds us of the way that he teaches us. Jesus does not act proud or like a king. He acts like a servant because we should be like servants, loving and caring for each other.

How can we make sure we behave in a way that would show our love for others this week?

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

We believe that we are meant to be people who care for each other and so we pray together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that she may be a living example of God's love for all people, especially those who are in need. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all our brothers and sisters around the world: that together with them, we will build a better world, free from poverty and filled with love. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may love God with all our hearts and be inspired to reach out in love to others. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Christ Jesus, you came into the world to show us how to live as servants to others. Let our love for you be shown in how we care for all people, especially those who are poor. Amen

Activity suggestions:

Ask the children to draw around their hand. Think of ways that we can help others and write them in the hand shape.

Talk about the children can be a good example to others. CAFOD encourages young people to follow Jesus by working with other young people across the world to make a difference. Have a look at the stories of some of the young people who have volunteered for a year of service with CAFOD on our blog <https://blog.cafod.org.uk/2017/09/07/step-gap-welcome-new-volunteers/#more-27355>

Ask the children to write a prayer thanking God for all those people who follow Jesus by helping others who are in need.

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 this together at home during the week, perhaps at bedtime. Ask them to do at least one thing that shows their love for others during the coming week.