

Children's liturgy – Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

Props: coloured card, pens and pencils

Welcome: Today we hear about just how much God loves the world and all the people in it. Let's think some more about that love, especially today on Mother's Day...

Song suggestions: Love is his word, love is his way (803, Laudate)
The Servant King (749, Laudate)

Opening prayer: Generous God, we give you thanks because you loved the world so much you sent your only Son to show us how to live and to grow in love. May we share your love with others. Amen.

First reading (optional): 2 Chronicles 36:14-16

Psalm: Psalm 136 R. v.6

Gospel acclamation: everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'. We suggest: Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory.

Gospel: John 3:14-21

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

In today's gospel reading we hear that God loved the world so much that he gave us Jesus to show us how to live and to help bring us closer to God.

How much do you think God loves you? How do you know when someone loves you?

Can you tell me two people who love you? And two people that you love? Is one of them your mum, or another woman in your family, like an aunty or a grandma? How should we treat someone that we love?

God does not just love a few special people, God loves everybody. God loves all people whether they are rich or poor, no matter where they live or where they come from, no matter whether they are healthy or ill, fat or thin. We are all part of God's global family.

God asks us to share this love and to also care for others no matter who they are or where in the world they live. God calls us to care for our global family and to share generously with them all that we have been given. When we do this we are sharing God's love.

Story: In Lent last year, a boy called Brendan and his friends from a church in Fareham decided they wanted to help their brothers and sisters around the world by raising some money. Their idea was a sponsored springtime swim in the sea!

The brave young people dashed into the chilly sea, cheered on by the friends and family. "It was freezing!" said Brendan, "but when we came out, we were all really happy and pleased we'd done it, especially given how much money we had raised for the appeal."

They raised £661 given to them by their parish and families, which they sent to CAFOD to help people in poor communities to have a better chance in life.

Do you think Brendan and his friends helped to share God's love with others?

How do you think you can share God's love with your mum or another special person in your family this week?

Intercessions: We think about our brothers and sisters around the world as we pray:

We pray for the Church around the world: that it may be a place of welcome and love for all people no matter who they are or where they come from. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are finding life hard because they are poor or sick: that they may find comfort in the love of those around them. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our own mothers, grandmas and aunties, and all the mothers in our parish, may we always show them love and be helpful and kind. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Loving God, show us how to reach out to others around the world in love and to support them to build a better future, free from poverty. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and on the back to draw or write how we can spread love around the world.

Cut heart shapes out of card and ask the children to write a prayer saying thank you for the love that they receive in their lives. Ask them to pray these at home together with their family during the week and to think of all people around the world in our global family who are also loved by God.

Or, on the heart shapes ask the children to write or draw a special message of love for their mothers or other special person. You could start them off by writing "Love is when you...." on one piece of card/paper and photocopying to the others.

Ask the children to tell their family all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to share God's love with other people both here and overseas in the coming week.

If you have already given out copies of the one-page (primary) Lent calendar for children, remind school-age children to use it this week. It can be started at any time in Lent, so you can print it out from cafod.org.uk/primary/lent.