

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

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Song suggestions: I am special (Share the Light, OCP Publications)
If I were a butterfly (298 Celebration hymnal for everyone, McCrimmons)

Welcome: In today's gospel we hear how the people of Jesus' own town, Nazareth, became very angry with him. Listen to find out why...

Opening prayer: Saving God, you sent your Son to show us how to live our lives. Help us to do all that we can to follow this example. Open our hearts to see that even the most ordinary-seeming person is capable of doing special things. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

First reading (optional): Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19

Psalm: Psalm 70:1-6, 15-17 r. 15

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 4:21-30

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

Last week we heard how Jesus was preaching in the Temple and how he had been sent by God to bring good news to people who are poor. The people were amazed with all that he said to them.

How do the people feel about what Jesus is saying this week?

The people do not believe that Jesus is special. They become angry about what he is saying. Why do you think that is?

Jesus was preaching in his home town. This was the place where he had grown up and many of the people knew him. They knew that he was the son of Joseph the carpenter. They found it difficult to believe what he was saying because they knew him to be an ordinary carpenter's son.

Sometimes when we know someone very well, we see their good points and their bad points. Because we know them so well we think of them as ordinary and we no longer see how special they are.

Sometimes the person themselves doesn't even realise they are doing anything special. They think they are just being quite ordinary.

But all people, no matter how ordinary they seem, are special. And they are all capable of doing special things.

Can you think of some ordinary people who have done very special or extraordinary things? Who are they and what did they do?

Ten-year-old Amy organises a raffle every year in her school to raise money for CAFOD. Her sister Hannah, 8, helps too.

Do you think this is extraordinary?

Eight-year-old Diego lives in San Salvador, the capital city of El Salvador. There are lots of gangs in the area. CAFOD have been working with people in Diego's community to find more peaceful ways to live together. Diego's school runs different sport, music and dance activities for children to join, to help build peace. These activities help children like Diego to develop their talents. Diego learns to play the drum in a peace band.

How is Diego similar to you? How is Diego different to you? Is Diego extraordinary in any way? What do you think makes people extraordinary?

God's people are unique. They come from different places and have different beliefs. Diego and Amy are just two examples of an ordinary person trying to live their daily life really well.

What do you think makes someone extraordinary?

The ordinary things that we do are special and extraordinary too. Can you think about a time when someone made you laugh? Or when someone was kind and generous to you? Or when you scored a great goal in football? Or when you did your best at something?

Did you think that was ordinary? Or did it feel special and extraordinary?

Let's all try to live our lives really well in the coming week, so that we can do special things in our lives and for each other.

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

God is always with us, giving us the strength and courage to take action and make a difference and so we pray together:

We pray for all the leaders in the world: that they may listen to their own people when they speak the truth and take action to make people's lives better. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people around the world who face injustice: that they may have the strength and courage to stand up for what they believe in and make a change. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that each of us may realise we are called to serve God and do extraordinary things, each in our own way. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of mercy and truth, open our hearts to the truth of the good news taught to us by your Son, Jesus. Open our eyes to see that all people are special and strengthen our faith so that we may serve you better, as we try to make a difference to the lives of others. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration. On the back ask them to write or draw the story of one of the ordinary people, who have done extraordinary things that they have heard today.

Share stories from the local newspaper of people who have done something really special. Ask the children to think about what it is that makes what the person has done so extraordinary. How are they similar or different to Diego, Amy and to the children themselves?

Give the children a star, cut out of paper or card. Ask them to write or draw on it something extraordinary that they or another person has done. Or ask them to write the qualities that they think that people have that make them special or extraordinary, such as kindness, generosity, courage or faith.

Ask the children to go home and tell their family all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to find out together about one more person who has managed to achieve extraordinary things in their life.