

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

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: Green

Props: Coloured pens or pencils

Song suggestions: When I needed a neighbour

Welcome: Today we hear about Jesus' special love for those who are poor, hungry, sad or badly treated. Let's think a bit more about this today.

Opening prayer: God of all, we give you thanks for your great love. Especially for those who are poor, those who hunger, those who are sad. Amen.

First reading (optional): Jeremiah 17:5-8

Psalm: Psalm 1:1-4, 6 r. Psalm 39:5

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 6:17, 20-26

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

Jesus talks to the disciples, saying that some people will end up happy, while some people will not. Can you remember some of the people who he said would be happy, or blessed?

Jesus says those who are poor will be happy, because the kingdom of God belongs to them.

Jesus says those who are hungry will be happy, they will have enough to eat.

Jesus says that those who cry will be happy, their tears will change to laughter.

Jesus says that those who are hated and badly treated for believing in him will be happy, because they will be rewarded in heaven.

Can you remember who Jesus says wouldn't be happy and why not?

Jesus says that those who are rich have everything they need now, and so do not need the gifts of heaven.

Jesus says that those who have more than enough food now, will go hungry, and that those who laugh will be filled with sadness.

It can seem strange to us that it is those who are poor, or hungry or even those who are sad, that Jesus says will be happiest. And it can seem very strange that Jesus says that those who are rich and happy, with lots to eat, will end up sad. It seems a bit upside down doesn't it.

So, why do you think Jesus said these things?

It's not Jesus' thinking that's upside down. It's ours. He doesn't want us to think that the only way we can be happy is to have lots of money and all the best toys and latest stuff.

Jesus loves all people but he has a special love for people who are poor, hungry, sad or picked on. And he asks us to be the same.

We are called to do what we can to help all people in our world to be happy. What do you think we can do to help people who are poor, hungry, sad or treated badly by others?

We can share what we have. We can comfort them. We can stick up for them. No matter where in the world they are.

What will you do this week if you see someone who is sad, hungry or hurt?

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

We pray for world leaders: that they may know and understand the hardships their people face, and that they may be moved to do what they can to change things for the better. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are poor, hungry, sad or hurt in our world: that they may know that they are loved and find happiness and hope for the future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, our family and friends: that we may reach out in love to all who are sad, so that they may laugh and feel joy again. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of love, open our hearts to others, that we may bring comfort to those who are sad, and share what we have with those who are in need. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Activity suggestions:

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to think about what they can do in the coming week to cheer up those who are sad, or what they can do to help people who are hungry around the world.

Ask the children to role play what they would do to help someone who is poor, hungry, sad, or being badly treated for their beliefs.

Ask the children to write their own set of Beatitudes. Are there groups of people in the world today that Jesus would call us to show special love for? For example refugees, those affected by climate change or natural disaster, those who are on the edges of society.

Ask the children to go home and tell their grown-ups all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to try hard in the coming week to help bring joy to others, especially those who are poor, hungry, sad or hurt.