

Children's liturgy – Fifth Sunday of Easter (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: white

Props: paper hearts, colouring pens and pencils

Song suggestions: A new commandment I give unto you (920, Laudate)

Welcome: Today Jesus has a very important message for his disciples, and for all who believe in him. Jesus asks us to love one another as he loves us. Let's think about how we can do that today.

Opening prayer: God of hope, you sent your Son Jesus to teach us how to truly love one another. Help us to follow his example and to love all our brothers and sisters around the world. Amen.

First reading (optional): Acts 14:21-27

Psalm: Psalm 144:8-13 r 1

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: John 13:31-35

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

Jesus tells his disciples that he will not be with them for much longer and he tells them how he'd like them to behave. Can you remember what he told them to do?

Jesus told the disciples to love one another, just as he had loved them.

What do you think this means? How did Jesus show his love for people?

Jesus spent time with people, especially those who were sick, lonely, frightened or poor. He listened to them and ate with them. He healed them and he helped them to change their lives for the better.

So do you think this message to love other people was just for the disciples? What do you think Jesus wants us to do?

Jasmin lives in Peru. There is lots of violence where she lives, but Jasmin belongs to a children's group that tries to improve the area where she lives. Together they created a children's park. Jasmin and her friends helped to clear the rubbish and now they have a safe place to play.

Tom, age 6, did something different last Christmas. Instead of asking for presents, he asked his friends and family to give money to CAFOD, because he wanted all children around the world to have somewhere safe to sleep at night. Tom raised over £500!

The children at St Werburgh's and St Columba's primary school in Chester made special promises to help others during Lent. They each gave up an item of food to go to a local cause and a toy to sell to help raise money for CAFOD. They also made promises about how they were going to treat other people. For example, Miss Lawrence's class promised to give a compliment to a different member of the school community each day.

Paolo lives in Lima, the capital of Peru. He lives high up on the hillsides. He gives up his time every Sunday to help make his neighbourhood a better place to live. The paths up and down the hillside are very steep, so Paolo is helping to build a staircase. This staircase will make it easier for people to move around and to get to safety if there is a fire or an earthquake.

How do you think Jasmin, Tom, Paolo and the children at St Werburgh's and St Columba's school are showing their love for others?

Their stories show us that we can all make a difference and find our own way to love one another.

Jesus asks us all to love one another as he loves us. What will you do to show your 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 pray together to the God who loves us:

We pray for world leaders: that they may follow Jesus's example and show special care for people who are poor, sick, alone or afraid. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all children around the world: that they may be loved and cared for and have hope for the future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may love one another as Jesus loves us. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Loving God, fill us with your love and help us to share this love with others, especially with those who are poor, sick, lonely or frightened. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to write or draw how they will love one another in the coming week.

Give the children a heart-shaped piece of paper. Ask them to write a prayer on it for all their brothers and sisters throughout the world. Or ask the children to write or draw how they will love one another in the coming week.

Find out more about some of the amazing ways children in Peru are showing their love for others in their community by trying to make it a better place to live at:

cafod.org.uk/primary/changemakers

If you download the Zappar app then you can make the pictures on this page come to life!

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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Ask the children to tell their family all that they have heard and thought about today. If they have written a prayer ask them to say it together as a family during the week. Ask the children to do at least one thing in the next week to show their love for others.

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