

Children's liturgy – Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: green

Welcome: Today we hear how Jesus was moved with compassion for people who were worried and who were looking for help. He sent the disciples out to care for them and he asks us to carry on this work today.

Song suggestion: God's Spirit is in my heart (864, Laudate)

Opening prayer: Loving God, we thank you for your care for each one of us. Move us to reach out and help one another in whatever way we can, as we try to follow you. Amen.

First reading (optional): Exodus 19:2-6

Psalm: Psalm 99:2-3, 5 r. 3

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings the gospel acclamation together.*

Gospel: Matthew 9:36 - 10:8

As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. So he said to his disciples, "The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest."

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

These twelve men were sent out by Jesus with the following instructions: "Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. Instead, you are to go to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. Go and preach, 'The Kingdom of heaven is near!' Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases, and drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid.

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

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

Jesus can see that the people are worried, that they are struggling and that they are looking for some help.

He is filled with compassion for them. But he doesn't just feel sorry for them, he is also moved to action.

He gathers together his twelve disciples, his closest friends, and sends them out with instructions, not only to preach and share his message with the people, but also to care for them. Jesus sends the disciples to help, support and heal the people. And to do it all for free, without asking for anything in return.

Can you think of a time when you saw that someone or a group of people needed some help or was worried about something? How did you feel? And what did you do?

Jesus talks to the disciples about the harvest, and how there are not enough workers to gather it in. Can you guess what he was talking about here?

Jesus knows that everywhere there are people who are looking for comfort and help. There are people who need to hear his message of love. But that there is only so much that he and the twelve disciples can do themselves.

He asks the disciples to pray to the owner of the harvest to send more workers. Who do you think this owner might be?

Jesus is telling the disciples to pray to God to send them more people to join in with their work, to follow Jesus and to share his love with others.

What do you think this means for us today? Sometimes we are the people who are in need of help. Sometimes we are the people who can help others.

We are followers of Jesus and so we are called to do what we can to love and help other people. This might be a member of our family or a friend, someone at school or church or in our local community. It could be someone further away who we know, or even who we don't.

When we see a problem, we are asked not just to feel sorry for the person who is sad, worried, ill or struggling, but like Jesus, we are called to take some action to help.

So this week, let us see what we can do to help others. Let us share God's love with one another and act with compassion when others are looking for support.

How will you do this during the coming week?

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

We know that God loves and cares for each one of us and so we have the courage to pray:

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

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We pray for the Church throughout the world: that we may continue to serve people, act with compassion and share God's loving care with all who are looking for help. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are worried, ill or finding things hard: that through God's grace they may receive the comfort and care that they need from those around them. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, our family and our friends: that we may be like the disciples, sharing God's love through our actions of comfort and help for others. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of mercy, fill us with compassion for our brothers and sisters, who are all loved by you. Lead us to take action and bring comfort and help where we can. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to write or draw on the back how they will help others in the coming week.

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with the people at home.

Find more activities for children at cafod.org.uk/familyprayers

*Gospel passage taken from:

Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition)

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