

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

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Song suggestions: O the love of my Lord (967, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear how Jesus has a special care for all who are working too hard, who are tired, and who are struggling. Let's think a bit more about this today...

Opening prayer: Caring God, you are there with us in the most difficult times. Help us when we find things hard. Help us to be there for others when they are struggling. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

First reading (optional): Zechariah 9:9-10

Psalm: Psalm 144:1-2, 8-11, 13-14. R. v.1

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

Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. Yes, Father, this was how you wanted it to happen.

"My Father has given me all things. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light."

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

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

Today we hear Jesus calling all people who are working hard, who are tired and struggling to come to him. Why do you think he does this?

Jesus knows that we all have times when we find life difficult. We all have times when even though we try hard, we can't do something. We all have times when we are tired, fed up and would like to give up.

Can you think of a time when you have felt like this? Did anyone help you or comfort you during this time? Who helped you? What did they do?

Jesus says his yoke is easy. He does not mean an egg yolk! This yoke is spelled differently. It is a sort of wooden bar that farmers around the world use to make it easier to pull heavy ploughs. So Jesus is saying that he will help us.

Jesus says in today's reading that he is always there to comfort and support us. That when we are tired or finding things difficult, we can turn to him and find rest.

What do you think this means? If we take our worries and the things that we find difficult to Jesus, he will be there for us.

How do you think we can share our worries, or the things we find hard, with Jesus?

We can share our worries in prayer. And we can pray for help during the most difficult times.

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is there with us when things are hard?

Just knowing that we are not alone can make a big difference when we are finding life hard. God is with us always, when we are alone, but also in the people who help and support us.

So, this week, let's remember we can turn to God when things are hard. But also, let's look after others who are finding things difficult and do our best to help them. We can show them that they are not alone by the way we treat them.

There are many ways we can do this. Here are some that we've thought of:

Perhaps you could pray for all people who are poor, sick, lonely or sad.

You could take part in a Summer FUNraiser to raise money for CAFOD and help build a world free from hunger. (*Find out more at cafod.org.uk/summer*)

You could take food to your local food bank to help those in your community who are struggling to get enough to eat. You could help your grown ups with jobs around the house when they are tired. Or you could send a postcard to someone you know who is sad to help cheer them up.

What other ways to help others can you think of?

What will you do this week to help someone who is finding life difficult, who is tired or struggling?

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

Jesus invites us to go to him when times are hard and so we pray together:

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 it may do all that it can to reach out to people when they are in need. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all members of our global family who are poor, or who are finding life difficult: may they know that they are not alone and find the support that they need. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may do all we can to help those who are finding life difficult. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of all, be with us when we find things hard. Strengthen us as we help each other, so that all people may have hope for the future. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Encourage the children to colour in the accompanying optional illustration and to write or draw on the back how they will help someone in the coming week who is tired or finding life difficult.

Invite the children to do a role play in pairs, ask one of them to pretend to be working really hard, to be tired, or to be struggling in some way. Ask the other child to act out what they would do to help and support that person.

Invite the children to write a prayer for the times when they are finding life hard, and for all those members of our global family who are struggling in some way.

Encourage the children to take on a challenge and get involved with a Summer FUNraiser. More information is available at cafod.org.uk/summer

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with the people at home. Encourage them to look out for people who are finding life difficult in the next week, and to do all that they can to help and support them.

See cafod.org.uk/families for more child-friendly activities.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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