

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

Preparing the worship space

Colour: green

Song suggestions: A new commandment, I give unto you (4, *Celebration Hymnal for Everyone*).

Welcome: Today we hear about how Jesus was a great teacher. Let's think about how important it is for everyone to get a chance to go to school and learn.

Opening prayer: Christ Jesus, teach us how to be kind and generous, sharing what we have with our friends, family and people all over the world. May we always listen to your word. Amen.

First reading (optional): Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm: Psalm 94:1-2, 6-9, r.9

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

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Jesus and his disciples came to the town of Capernaum, and on the next Sabbath Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught, for he wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority.

Just then a man with an evil spirit came into the synagogue and screamed, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you here to destroy us? I know who you are — you are God's holy messenger!"

Jesus ordered the spirit, "Be quiet, and come out of the man!"

The evil spirit shook the man hard, gave a loud scream, and came out of him. The people were all so amazed that they started saying to one another, "What is this? Is it some kind of new teaching? This man has authority to give orders to the evil spirits, and they obey him!"

And so the news about Jesus spread quickly everywhere in the province of Galilee.

(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 starts to teach in the temple, where the Jewish people went to pray. The people are surprised and impressed with the way he teaches. Why do you think that is?

The people in the temple believe what Jesus says and they trust him, more than the teachers they usually listen to. Why did they see Jesus as special?

Jesus teaches the people through the stories he tells. But he also teaches them - and us - through the things he does. He lives out what he is teaching. Can you think of an example when Jesus teaches us through his actions? What does he want us to learn?

Teachers are very important, they help us to learn about all sorts of things. What is your teacher's name? What do they help you to learn? Who else helps you to learn? Family or friends perhaps?

Many of us are not able to go to school at the moment because of coronavirus. How does that make you feel?

Some children who live in poorer countries around the world do not have the chance to go to school even when coronavirus isn't here. Can you think of reasons why that might be?

Some children live in places where it isn't safe for them to travel to school or the school is too far away. Some children have to do jobs instead of going to school or they have to look after their little brothers and sisters while their mum and dad go to work. Some families cannot afford to pay the school fees or buy the uniforms or books their children need to go to school.

Do you think it is fair that these children do not have the chance to learn? What do you think can be done to help?

At CAFOD we believe that every child has a right to go to school, and we work together with local people around the world to make sure more children can learn.

Faizah lives in a village in Sudan. Her school had no roof, so when it rained the pupils and teachers simply got wet. There were no seats and it was hard to get books and stationery.

But now, Faizah's school has been rebuilt. CAFOD worked with local experts to provide chairs, stationery, books, everything that the children and teachers need to learn and teach well.

Faizah says, "The school is beautiful. We're very proud of it. Now we have proper classrooms and chairs and it's less stressful and easier to learn."

Let's try this week to do our best to learn. To listen to our teachers, our parents, and all those who try to teach us the way.

And let us try to listen to Jesus and to what he is teaching us too, so that together we may love one another as he asks us to.

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

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International. Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398

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

We hope that all we say and do shows that we are trying to be more like Jesus, our teacher, and so we pray together:

We pray for our Church all over the world: that it may teach God's word the way that Jesus did, through words and actions. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for children in the poorest countries: that they may have the chance to go to school, to learn and ask questions, and have a brighter future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for teachers: that they may help children learn all kinds of interesting things at school that will help them as they grow up. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may work together with others to make sure all children have the chance to go to school. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of hope, through your Son Jesus you teach us to love and care for all our brothers and sisters wherever they are in the world. Help us to work together with others to make sure that all children have a chance to go to school and dream of a brighter future. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Encourage the children to think about their favourite teacher and to explain what it is they like about them. Perhaps they could pray for their teacher in the week.

Reflect with the children on all the help they get so that they can go to school, or on all the help that they get to learn at home. Where does their uniform come from? Their books? Who takes them to school? How do they get there? Who helps them with their work? Who explains things when they don't understand? Encourage them to write a prayer of thanks for being able to learn.

Encourage the children to share all that they have heard and thought about today with others at home. As they learn this week, ask them to think of Faizah and other children around the world. If they have written a prayer, ask them to say it at home with their families during the week.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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