

Children's liturgy – Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: White

Props: Coloured pens and pencils, card, glue or sticky tape to make crowns with, post-it notes, photos of different leaders.

Song suggestions: *Servant King (187, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)*

Welcome: Today we hear how Jesus is laughed at while on the cross and how two thieves have very different things to say to him. We think about the type of king that Jesus is and how we can share his love with others.

Opening prayer: O Lord Jesus Christ, our King and Saviour, may we never forget your love for each one of us. We praise you always. Amen.

First reading (optional): Samuel 5:1-3

Psalm: Psalm 121:1-5. R. Cf. v.2

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

Gospel: Luke 23:35-43

The people stood there watching while the Jewish leaders jeered at Jesus: "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah whom God has chosen!"

The soldiers also mocked him: they came up to him and offered him cheap wine, and said, "Save yourself if you are the king of the Jews!"

Above him were written these words: "This is the King of the Jews."

One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? You received the same sentence he did. Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!"

Jesus said to him, "I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me."

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

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

In today's gospel we hear how Jesus is put to death on a cross and how he is

laughed at and made fun of by the people watching.

Can you imagine what it must have been like for Jesus in front of all those people, to be in pain and to be laughed at? How do you think Jesus felt?

The label above Jesus' cross said he was the king of the Jews. What do you think of when we talk about a king? What do kings wear and where do they live?

The crowds can't understand why Jesus, the Son of God, can't save himself. They are very confused. To them a king is someone who has power, money, land and who dresses in expensive clothes - not someone who ends up on a cross with a crown of thorns on his head.

Kings are powerful, but on the cross Jesus seems helpless. He is going to die, and the people can't understand it.

We know now that this was all a part of God's plan - Jesus had to die so that we are saved.

Jesus is a very different kind of king. He is the king of love. He gives us all a chance of new life with him in heaven.

There were two thieves on either side of Jesus, both on crosses as well. Can you remember what the first thief said to Jesus?

The first thief wanted Jesus to prove that he was the Son of God by coming off the cross. He insulted him.

The second thief tells the first off for being so rude to Jesus. He knows Jesus has done nothing wrong. This second thief asks only to be remembered by Jesus.

Jesus can see that the second thief is sorry for what he has done. Jesus promises the second thief that he will remember him, and that he will be welcomed into Jesus' kingdom.

What does this show us about Jesus in our lives?

Even when things are bad, when we are frightened, or hurting, upset or lonely, Jesus is right there with us. He knows how it feels to be laughed at, to be sad, to be in pain. And just like he did with the second thief on the cross, he is always willing to love us and to welcome us.

Jesus, the king of love, showed his love for us and for all people by dying on the cross. How do you think we can show our love for others as Jesus asks us to?

We can be kind, welcoming, generous. We can make sure that when we have power, we use it as Jesus did – for the good of all people – not just to make ourselves rich or important. We can make sure we include others in our friendships

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and in our games. We can join together with others to raise money or to change a situation that we think is unfair or needs improvement.

This week, when things are difficult, remember that Jesus is always with you. And when you see that things are difficult for others, perhaps you can try to do all that you can to be loving towards them and to help them.

What will you do this week to share love?

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

Let us pray to Christ our King together:

We pray for the Church: that it may follow the example of Christ, loving and serving others at all times. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for our brothers and sisters in every country: that we may always remember them, and pray and work for change so all people may live free from poverty. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may remember that God is with us in the hardest times and help each other when things are difficult. Lord in your mercy...

Closing prayer: O King of Kings, you died so that we might have new life. Help us to share your love with each other and to be there for each other in the most difficult times. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of a crown and to write words around it that describe the type of king that Jesus is (eg loving, fair, just, wise, forgiving, serving etc).

Make cardboard crowns with the children. Encourage them to write words on post-it notes that describe what they normally think of when they think of a king or queen (eg power, wealth, riches, palaces, etc). How many of these describe the type of king that Jesus is? Stick the ones that apply to Jesus on their crowns. Then ask them to write any more words that describe the type of king that Jesus is on post-its and stick them to their crowns (eg fair, just, wise, loving, forgiving, serving, etc)

Share pictures of different leaders with the children. These could be political leaders, or leaders in sport, the community or other areas. Discuss with the children who these people are and what type of leader they are. Encourage the children to make a collage or artwork about the type of leader that they would like to be in their own communities or in the world.

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Create a paper chain of people with the children and encourage them to write on it how they will share love with others in the coming week, both as individuals and within the community.

Remind the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with their grown ups. Encourage them to do at least one thing in the coming week to share Christ's love with others.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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

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