

Children's liturgy – Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

If you are with the children, prepare the materials. If you are running an online session, let parents know in advance what is needed and suggest they download and print the illustration where possible from cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

Colour: purple

Props: coloured card, pens and pencils

Song suggestions: Love is his word, love is his way (803, Laudate)

The Servant King (749, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear about how much God loves the world and all the people in it. Let's think some more about that love, especially today on Mother's Day.

Opening prayer: Generous God, we give you thanks because you loved the world so much you sent your only Son to show us how to live. May we share your love with others. Amen.

First reading (optional): 2 Chronicles 36:14-16

Psalm: Psalm 136 R. v.6

Gospel acclamation: everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'. We suggest: Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory.

Gospel: John 3:14-21

As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior.

Those who believe in the Son are not judged; but those who do not believe have already been judged, because they have not believed in God's only Son. This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil. Those who do evil things hate the light and will not come to the light, because they do not want their evil deeds to be shown up. But those who do what is true come to the light in order that the light may show that what they did was in obedience to God.

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

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from that reading?

In today's gospel reading we hear that God loved the world so much that he gave us Jesus to show us how to live and to help bring us closer to God.

How does it make you feel to know that God loves us all so much that he was willing to send his only son, Jesus, to be with us here on earth?

Can you tell me two people who love you? And two people that you love? Is one of them your mum, or another special woman in your family? What does it mean to love someone? How should we treat someone that we love?

God does not just love you or me or our mothers, God loves everybody. God loves all people whether they are rich or poor, no matter where they live or where they come from, no matter whether they are healthy or ill, fat or thin. We are all part of God's global family.

God asks us to share this love and to also care for others no matter who they are or where in the world they live. God calls us to care for our global family and to share generously with them all that we have been given. When we do this we are sharing God's love.

Story: Over Christmas, lots of people decided they wanted to help their brothers and sisters around the world by raising some money. They thought it would be a good idea to go outside and run, despite the chilly weather. Whole families took part in the fun run, and some of their parish priests joined in too!

They raised over £20,000 promised to them by their friends and families, which they sent to an organisation called CAFOD who help people in poor communities to have a better chance in life.

Do you think these Christmas runners helped to share God's love with others? How do you think you can share God's love with your mum or another special person in your family this week?

Intercessions: We think about our brothers and sisters in poor countries as we pray:

We pray for the Church around the world: that it may be a place of welcome and love for all people no matter who they are or where they come from. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are finding life hard because of poverty or illness, especially coronavirus: that they may find comfort in the love of those around them. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our mothers, may we always show them love and be helpful and kind. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Loving God, show us how to reach out to others around the world in love and to support them to build a better future, free from poverty. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and on the back to draw or write how we can spread love all round the world.

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

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Cut heart shapes out of card and ask the children to write a prayer saying thank you for the love that they receive in their lives. Ask them to pray these at home together with their family during the week and to think of all people around the world in our global family who are also loved by God.

Or, on the heart shapes ask the children to write or draw a special message of love for their mothers or other special person. You could start them off by writing “Love is when you...” on one piece of card/paper and photocopying to the others.

Ask the children to tell their family all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to share God’s love through their actions in the coming week.

If you have already given out copies of the one-page (primary) Lent calendar for children, remind school-age children to use it this week. It can be started at any time in Lent, so you can print it out or send the link from cafod.org.uk/primary/lent

*Gospel passage taken from: Good News Translation® (Today’s English Version, Second Edition) © 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved.

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