

Children's liturgy – Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: white

Props: Coloured paper or card, newspapers and magazines to cut up for a collage

Song suggestions: Whatsoever you do (926, Laudate)

When I needed a neighbour (888, Laudate)

Welcome: Today Jesus tells us that he is in all people, and that when we help others or treat them badly then we are doing the same to him. Let's think a bit more about this now.

Opening prayer: Christ Jesus, help us to see you in every one of our brothers and sisters around the world. Inspire us to treat those who are hungry, thirsty, lonely, sick or in prison as we would wish to be treated. Amen.

First reading (optional): Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17

Psalm: cf. Psalm 22:1-3, 5-6. R. v.1

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

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

“When the Son of Man comes as King and all the angels with him, he will sit on his royal throne, and the people of all the nations will be gathered before him. Then he will divide them into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the righteous people on his right and the others on his left. Then the King will say to the people on his right, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father! Come and possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.’

“The righteous will then answer him, ‘When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these members of my family, you did it for me!’

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Away from me, you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels! I was hungry but you would not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me a drink; I was a stranger but you would not welcome me in your homes, naked but you would not clothe me; I was sick and in prison but you would not take care of me.’

Then they will answer him, ‘When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and we would not help you?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me.’ These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment, but the righteous will go to eternal life.”

(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 tells us about the kind of person who will be welcome in his kingdom. Can you remember what they did to make Jesus happy?

This group of people fed Jesus when he was hungry, gave him a drink when he was thirsty. They welcomed him when he was a stranger and lonely, they gave him clothes when he didn’t have any. They visited him when he was sick and in prison.

But how do they feel and what do they say when they hear all this? They are very surprised and they ask Jesus when it was that they did all these things.

What does Jesus answer? He says, “when you did this to the least of my brothers or sisters, you did it to me.” What do you think this means?

We are all God’s children. We are all brothers and sisters – members of one big global family. And Jesus is saying that he is in each one of us. And so, every time we help someone else, every time we treat someone kindly, welcome them or share with them, then we are doing this to Jesus.

Can you think of a time when you have done one of these things? When have you given food to someone hungry or a drink to someone thirsty? When have you welcomed someone or given someone in need some clothes? When have you visited someone who is sick? Or can you think of a time when someone has shared with, welcomed or cared for you? How did you feel?

Nyanguet lives in South Sudan. When her village was attacked, she travelled across the country with her five children to find somewhere safe to live. With the support of CAFOD’s local expert, she received some emergency food to keep her going, as well as tools and seeds to plant on a piece of land given to her by her new neighbours.

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is in each and every person around the world? And, if Jesus is in every person and we are all brothers and sisters, how do you think we should treat each other?

This week, let’s all try to remember that Jesus is in every person and to treat people as Jesus wants us to. Let’s try to help those who are hungry, thirsty, lonely and sick. What will you do this week to help them?

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

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

We are all God's children and so we pray together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may see Christ in all people and be a shining example of Jesus' message to us. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our brothers and sisters throughout the world: that each person may know they are special and all people may be treated with love and generosity. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may all do what we can to share food and water with those who hunger and thirst, to care for those who are sick or in prison and to welcome those who are lonely. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of all, show us how to answer your call so we may see your kingdom – a place where no one is hungry, thirsty, or alone – here on earth. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying optional illustration and to write or draw on the back what they will do in the coming week to share with someone who is hungry or thirsty, to welcome someone, or to visit or care for someone.

On a large sheet of coloured paper or card, put the text "when you did this to the least of my brothers or sisters, you did it to me." in the middle. Then invite the children to stick photos of children from all around the world, or to draw people from all around the world to add to this collage, to show that we are all brothers and sisters and that Christ is in each and every one of us.

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with their grown-ups. Encourage them to try to do at least one thing during the week to help give food to someone who is hungry, a drink to someone thirsty, to welcome someone or visit someone in need.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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