

Children's liturgy – The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: White

Props: Coloured pens and pencils. Paper fish and bread of different designs and baskets to put them in.

Song suggestions:

Bread for the world (625, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear how Jesus performed a great miracle with bread for five thousand people. Let's find out why this miracle is so important to us as well.

Opening prayer: Jesus, you come to us as bread and wine. Fill us with your kindness and give us the appetite and strength to change the world for the better. Amen.

First reading (optional): Genesis 14:18-20

Psalm: Psalm 109:1-4. r. v4

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

Gospel: Luke 9:11-17

Jesus welcomed the crowds, spoke to them about the Kingdom of God, and healed those who needed it.

When the sun was beginning to set, the twelve disciples came to him and said, "Send the people away so that they can go to the villages and farms around here and find food and lodging, because this is a lonely place."

But Jesus said to them, "You yourselves give them something to eat."

They answered, "All we have are five loaves and two fish. Do you want us to go and buy food for this whole crowd?" (There were about 5,000 men there.)

Jesus said to his disciples, "Make the people sit down in groups of about fifty each."

After the disciples had done so, Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, thanked God for them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. They all ate and had enough, and the disciples took up twelve baskets of what was left over.

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

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

(This miracle is the only miracle found in all four Gospels, apart from the miracle of the resurrection, and so it is a really important event.)

After a long day listening to Jesus, the disciples want to send the crowd away to find food and shelter. But Jesus says that the disciples have to feed the people themselves.

Why does Jesus want the disciples to feed the people?

Jesus wants them to care about the people they meet and whether they are hungry or not. He wants God's love to be shown through the disciples.

So, what happens next?

What does Jesus say and do?

Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, blessed them, broke them up and asked the disciples to share them around.

In the gospel, through God's grace, everyone, all 5000 people, eat the bread and the fish, and there is plenty left over, twelve baskets full!

What do you think the disciples and other people said to each other when this happened?

Imagine you are in the crowd of people who have come to Jesus. You were hungry and had no idea where you would find food. But then because of Jesus' miracle you get given something to eat by the disciples.

How do you feel?

What would you like to say to Jesus after you've eaten some bread and fish?

Do you remember to thank God for the food that you eat every day? And what about the people who grow, harvest, prepare, sell and cook your food? Do you thank them?

Even though there is enough food produced in the world to feed everyone there are many people who go without food every day – both here in the UK and in other countries. One person in every ten is hungry.

(If you have time here and a large group, you could divide the children into groups of ten and then pick one child from each group to represent those who go hungry)

Big food companies are growing and sharing food in many ways that harm the earth and make it difficult for some people to have enough food to eat. They make lots of money and hold lots of power, while small scale farmers around the world, along with their families and communities are left living in poverty.

(For more information about the food system and how children can make a difference see cafod.org.uk/stepup)

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

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How does it make you feel to hear that? Do you think it is fair?

We are all members of one global family. We are all parts of one body – the body of Christ. So if one person is hungry, it is like we are all hungry.

Just like Jesus asks the disciples to feed the crowd in today's reading, we are also asked to do what we can to make sure that everyone has enough to eat.

What do you think we can do to help make sure everyone can get enough food to eat each day?

One of the things that we can do is to ask the government to support the people around the world who grow food, not the big companies.

This week let us give thanks for the food that we have. Let us remember to thank God for all that we have been given, as well as thanking and praying for all the people who are involved in the getting the food we eat from the farm to our table.

Let us also try to do one thing this week to help make the world a fairer place, so that everyone has enough to eat.

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

God of bread and God of life, we pray together...

We pray for world leaders: that they may work to make sure that all people can have what they need to live life to the full. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for all the people who do not have enough food today and for an end to world hunger: that all people throughout the world may have enough to eat. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our families, schools and parishes: that we may be willing to share with others. May we work to build a brighter world together for all our global family. Lord in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Jesus, you fed the hungry crowds. Open our eyes to the needs of others and help us to follow your example of love and service. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Encourage the children to get involved in our Step up to the plate campaign and tell the government to keep its promises to help those who are most in need. More information can be found at cafod.org.uk/stepup

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustrations of bread and fish and to put them in the baskets to be offered up during the Mass. On the back ask them to

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write or draw what they will do to help make sure that all people locally and around the world have enough food to eat.

Share some of the global recipes available at cafod.org.uk/kidzzone with the children and encourage them to think about making one of them at home during the next week.

Invite the children to write their own prayers of thanksgiving to God for the food that they eat and to say that home during the week. Can they also give thanks for all the people who are involved in growing and making their food?

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with the people at home and to get involved in our food campaign at cafod.org.uk/stepup.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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

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