

Children's liturgy – Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: Green

Props: Coloured pens and pencils, weighing scales, small plain cards, pebbles.

Song suggestions: O Lord, hear my prayer (929, Laudate)

Welcome: Today we hear about a bad judge and a widow who would not give up. And Jesus teaches us the importance of justice, of praying and of never giving up hope. Let's find out more.

Opening prayer: God of justice and wisdom, help us to keep on praying and never to doubt that you will be with us always. Amen.

First reading (optional): Exodus 17:8-13

Psalm: Psalm 12-. R. Cf. v.2

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

Gospel: Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged. "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected people. And there was a widow in that same town who kept coming to him and pleading for her rights, saying, 'Help me against my opponent!' For a long time the judge refused to act, but at last he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect people, yet because of all the trouble this widow is giving me, I will see to it that she gets her rights. If I don't, she will keep on coming and finally wear me out!'"

And the Lord continued, "Listen to what that corrupt judge said. Now, will God not judge in favour of his own people who cry to him day and night for help? Will he be slow to help them? I tell you, he will judge in their favour and do it quickly. But will the Son of Man find faith on earth when he comes?"

(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 a story about a bad judge and a widow who wants justice – who wants what is right.

Judges are supposed to be fair and honest, but this isn't always the case. The prophets in the Bible were always getting angry with bad judges who thought more about themselves than about the people who needed their help. And if the judges didn't sort out the problems fairly then people would suffer again and again.

Can you think of things that seem unfair to you? How do you feel when someone has treated you unfairly?

The widow was ignored by the law, but she didn't give up. She just kept asking the judge to make things right. Eventually, just to get rid of her, he gave her what she wanted, justice. Her prayers were finally answered.

Why do you think Jesus told us this story? What does he want us to understand?

The widow is like us - we call to God in our prayers to give us what we need and want.

But if this bad judge eventually did the right thing, how much more will God, who is all-powerful and good, do what is right? So, if we don't get what we pray for the first time, should we just give up?

Jesus says that God hears the cries of all who call out to him day and night. And God will certainly answer our prayers, even if it's not in the way that we expect.

How does it make you feel to know that God always hears you when you pray?

There are many things that are unfair in our world. And there are many people, like the widow in the story, who struggle to make their voices heard.

We can pray for these people, but we also have to do what we can to make sure all people are treated fairly. Who knows, we might even be the answer to someone's prayers!

Did you know that one in three people around the world do not have enough safe and healthy food all year round? This is not fair and it is not right.

Do you think you could do something about this? (*See the activity suggestions below and also encourage the children to think of their own ideas*).

This week think about how you can treat other people in our world fairly and justly. What will you do to help others know that you care?

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

Let us pray together to God for a fairer world:

We pray for the Church: that it may stand up for what is right and never stay silent when people are treated unfairly. Lord in your mercy...

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

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We pray for people in our community and around the world who are struggling to get enough food: that God may give us all strength to work together for a fairer world where everyone has enough. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may show kindness, fairness and justice in our hearts and in our homes. Lord in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God who always hears us, help us to make a change when we see something that is not right in our world. May we find strength to keep going, even if at first we are not heard. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration. They could add what they think the judge and the woman are saying to each other in the speech bubbles. On the back they could write or draw how they will stand up for what is right in the coming week.

Using the weighing scales, encourage all the children to make some simple cards with the words: *justice, fairness, mercy, prayer, faith* and *hope* on. Then get them to put them in the weighing scales and to keep adding more cards with the same words on until the scales are equally balanced. Then they can see fairness. (You might need to add some little pebbles if it takes too long!)

Invite the children to write a prayer to God for a fairer world for all people to live in. Or share our prayer for the world food crisis with them. Available at cafod.org.uk/primary

Encourage the children to get involved with our step up to the plate campaign and call on the government to keep the poorest communities at the heart of their decisions. More information is available at cafod.org.uk/stepup

Remind the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today with their grown ups. If they have written a prayer, encourage them to say it together in the coming week. Remind them to do all that they can to stand up for what is right and fair in the coming week.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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

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