

Children's liturgy – Fourth Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: white

Song suggestions: Take my hands (676, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Welcome: Today Jesus tells us that he has come so that we may have life in all its fullness. But what does it mean to live life to the full? Let's think some more about this today...

Opening prayer: God of all, you sent your son Jesus, so that we may have life to the full. Inspire us to do all that we can so all your children around the world may live free from poverty and hunger. Amen.

First reading (optional): Acts 2:14, 36-41

Psalm: Psalm 22:1-6. R. v.1

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

Gospel: John 10:1-10

Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice."

Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

So Jesus said again, "I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever comes in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life — life in all its fullness.

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

Gospel reflection: In today's reading Jesus tells us a parable in which he is the gate which takes us to God. But can you remember what Jesus says, right at the end of today's gospel?

Jesus says, "I have come so that you might have life – life in all its fullness."

What do you think it means to have life in all its fullness?

Living life to the full doesn't mean having all the latest toys or the coolest clothes or the biggest house.

And it doesn't even mean just having all the things we need in life, like enough food and somewhere safe to live, although this is a really important part of living life to the full.

It also means being the best person that we can be, living our lives well and having the chance to use all our gifts and talents for the good of all.

What gifts and talents do you have? What are you good at?

Do you always make the most of the gifts that you have? Do you always try to be the best person you can be?

Lima, a city in Peru, is extremely dry, with very little rain. Which means that it faces many challenges, particularly when it comes to the climate.

Lima is surrounded by a chain of mountains called the Lomas de Lima. Lomas means 'hills'. These mountains are very important and are known as Lima's 'green lung'. But despite their importance they are under threat from pollution and mining.

But children in schools in Lima are doing what they can to protect them. Supported by CAFOD, a local organisation called CIDAP have set up an eco-brigade in four local schools.

Gloria is 11 and is a member of one of the eco-brigades. She says: "If I could change the world, I would collect water and grow plants. If there are no plants, there is no life. They give us life; they protect us so that we can breathe fresh air."

Gloria and the other members of the eco-brigades are using their talents to protect the Lomas and to make the world a better place for their community and for all of us.

Let's do all that we can this week to live our own lives to the full – doing all that we can to be the best people we can be and using our gifts and talents for the good of others.

And let's also do all that we can to help others to live their lives to the full too – people here who we see every day and our brothers and sisters around the world.

What will you do this week to live life to the full and to help others to do the same?

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

We pray together to God, who comes to give us life to the full:

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

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We pray for world leaders: that they may do all that they can to make sure all their people have the chance to live life to the full. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all our brothers and sisters around the world: that they may have the chance to live free from poverty and hunger and be able to make the most of their own talents and gifts to build a better future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may use our gifts and talents to be the best people we can be and for the good of all. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: God of life in all its fullness, be with us as we try to be the best people we can be. Inspire us to help one another to use the gifts and talents you have given us, so that the world may be a better place, reflecting the glory of your Kingdom. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of some children who are using their gifts and talents and living life to the full. Encourage the children to write or draw on the back how they can try to be the best people they can be, and how they will help others to live life to the full.

Find out more about children and young people in Peru who are making a difference to their community at cafod.org.uk/changemakers

Remind the children to tell their grown ups about all that they have done in the liturgy. Encourage them to try during the week to be the best people they can be and use their gifts and talents for the good of others.

*Gospel passage taken from: Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition)
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