



Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

The Ascension of the Lord

White

'Blessed them'

Acts 1:8-11 Psalm 47 Ephesians 1:17-21 Luke 24:50-58



Jesus had his disciples with him when it was time for him to leave. What did Jesus do just before he left? Where was he going? Why did Jesus have to leave his disciples? How do you think they felt? What did they do after Jesus had gone? If we are disciples of Jesus too, what does this mean for us?

Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for The Ascension of the Lord, starting with the Gospel. (You may choose to use or focus on one reading only, but remember that the Gospel may not be omitted.) Then look through the preparatory material that follows and familiarise yourself with the Liturgy Outline.

GOSPEL

Luke 24:50-58

Jesus led his disciples out to Bethany, where he raised his hands and blessed them. As he was doing this, he left and was taken up to heaven.

After his disciples had worshipped him, they returned to Jerusalem and were very happy. They spent their time in the temple, praising God.

FIRST READING

Acts 1: 8-11

Jesus told his disciples: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world."

After Jesus had said this and while they were watching, he was taken up into a cloud. They could not see him, but as he went up, they kept looking up into the sky.

Suddenly two men dressed in white clothes were standing there beside them. They said, "Why are you men from Galilee standing here and looking up into the sky? Jesus has been taken to heaven. But he will come back in the same way that you have seen him go."

PSALM

Psalm 47

Response: God mounts the throne to shouts of joy.

All of you nations, clap your hands and shout joyful praises to God.

The Lord most High is fearsome, the ruler of all the earth. **R**

God goes up to his throne, as people shout and trumpets blast.

Sing praises to God our King. **R**

God is ruler of all the earth! Praise God with songs. **R**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:17-21

Brothers and sisters:

I ask the glorious Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you his Spirit. The Spirit will make you wise and let you understand what it means to know God.

My prayer is that light will flood your heart and that you will understand the hope that was given to you when God chose you. Then you will discover the glorious blessings that will be yours together with all of God's people.

I want you to know about the great and mighty power that God has for us followers. It is the same wonderful power he used when he raised Christ from death and let him sit at his right side in heaven. There Christ rules over all forces, authorities, powers, and rulers. He rules over all beings in this world and will rule in the future world as well.

Scriptures from the Lectionary for Masses with Children (CEV)
© Archdiocese of Chicago LTP. 1994 Used with permission

Background to the Readings for Leaders

The Gospel of Luke is sometimes known as the Gospel of joy, because joyfulness and rejoicing are constant references. Luke is the only writer who describes the event of the ascension, both briefly in his Gospel, and in the Acts of the Apostles. The joyful response of the disciples to Jesus' ascension is a far cry from the fear with which they earlier reacted to his crucifixion. They do not lose the sense of his presence with them as they worship in the temple. The temple plays a crucial role in Luke's account of the public life of Jesus, so it is fitting that it closes with his disciples returning there to pray. There is rich symbolism in the numbers which are involved with this feast – forty days from Easter to the Ascension, then the nine days the disciples spent in prayer between Ascension Thursday and Pentecost, which have given rise to the 'novena', a devotional practice of praying for nine days in a focused way for particular intentions.

Images from the Readings

- *Understand the scriptures*
- *Power from on high*
- *Blessed them*
- *Carried up into heaven*
- *Worshipped him*

Reflection for Leaders

As we reflect on this Gospel reading today, we are reminded that the ongoing task which Jesus left for his disciples after he had gone is an ongoing commission for us as believers today. The disciples were eye-witnesses to the things that Jesus said and did while he was on earth, but we too are called to be witnesses for Jesus. We have received the Holy Spirit through our Baptism and Confirmation, and Jesus has promised us that his Spirit will help us, stand alongside us and strengthen us as we share the Good News with others. In what ways today are you like the disciples, facing a new journey out into the world? In what ways can you give



witness to your faith? Do you or does your community continually praise God? How might you incorporate continual praise into your days this week?

The joyful response by the disciples to Jesus' departure might be a challenge for us – is there anything worse than a sour Christian! Try to live joyfully in all the small actions of your life this week. Look for opportunities to bring joy to another person.

Reflecting on the Readings with the children

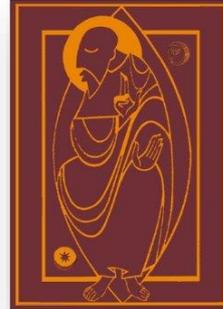
Before Sunday read over the suggested discussion points given in the Leader's Liturgy Outline. With the 8-12 year olds: First, listen to the children's own responses to the Reading/s and then, if needed, use some of the discussion starters suggested.

With the 5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'.

Suggested Focus

Prepare a focus for the area where the children's Liturgy of the Word is to be held:

White cloth, Lectionary, a candle,



LITURGY OUTLINE

The Ascension of the Lord

At a suitable moment after the Opening Rites, but before the First Reading is proclaimed, the children are presented with the Children's Lectionary and a candle and sent, with their ministers, to the place where they will celebrate their own Liturgy of the Word, with words of dismissal such as the following:

INVITATION – Pōwhiri I invite the children to join in the procession for their celebration of the Liturgy of the Word.

To the Minister of the Word: Receive this Book of Readings and proclaim God's Word faithfully to the children entrusted to your care.

Receive this candle as the light of Christ who is present in his Word.

PROCESSION WITH THE BOOK OF READINGS – Te Kapa o te Pukapuka Tapu

WELCOME – Ko te whakatau

Leader: O God, fill us with faith and joy, that we may praise you forever. Help us to remember that you are always with us and that we need never be afraid

R Amen.

First Reading: Acts 1:8-11

(if used)

The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki
Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

Psalm 47

Response: God mounts the throne to shouts of joy.

(or another suitable response known by the children)

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:17-21

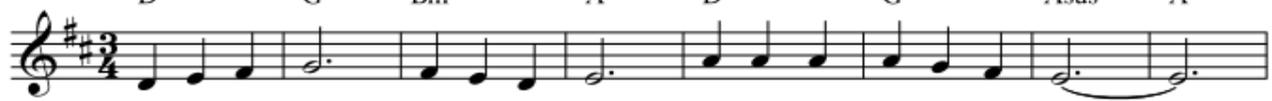
(if used)

The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki
Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Sing)

Music © 2011 Maria Guzzo

D G Bm A D G Asus⁴ A



Easter: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Je - sus is ri - sen from death.____

Bm G D A G A D



Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. He is the light of the world.

Gospel: Luke 24:50-58

Minister of the Word: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke
Children: **Glory to you, O Lord / Korōria ki ā koe, e te Ariki**

At the end of the Gospel: The Gospel of the Lord
Children: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ / Kia whakanuia rā koe, e te Ariki, e Hēhu Karaiti.**

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH THE CHILDREN – Whai Whakāaro

8-12 year olds: *Suggested Beginning: A good place to begin is with the question: What did you hear? Allow each child the opportunity to respond in their own words to hearing the Word of God. Then begin a general discussion, building on these responses, perhaps using some prepared questions, to stimulate ideas:*

- How do you feel when someone you love very much has to go away? What did the disciples do when Jesus left them? (they worshiped Jesus, then returned to Jerusalem and were very happy, they praised God)



- Why do you think the disciples were happy? (they knew that Jesus had returned to his Father and that he hadn't left them alone, he was going to give them power to do great things)
- In the First Reading we heard about that power, it was the Holy Spirit, we also received the Holy Spirit when we were baptised, so we have the power to be witnesses for Jesus. How can we be a witness to Jesus this week? (by being welcoming and hospitable; avoiding hurting others by our words or actions; responding to other people's needs; talking about what God means to you in your life)

The Feast of the Ascension is a good opportunity to discuss with the children the legacy left to the disciples and the Church today by Jesus. You could quiz them on the teachings that Jesus has left, as we have encountered them through the Gospels of the Sundays since Easter in his farewell discourse to the disciples. You could talk about the practicalities of loving our neighbour as we love ourselves. Of how we are to celebrate Christ's presence with us and why we do so. Of Jesus' promise of life with him forever for those who keep his commandments and believe in him.

5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'

LITURGICAL ACTION – Ko te Ritenga Karakia

Joyfully praise God with an appropriate song or dance today.

Suggestion for simple dance: With instrumental music playing, let the children watch the candle and imitate the flicker of its flame. In pairs the children could mirror each other's actions.



PROFESSION OF FAITH – Panui o te Whakapono

We believe in God the Father,
who made the whole world.
We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
who was born in Bethlehem
and lived among us,
who died on the cross for us,
and rose from the dead.
We believe in the Holy Spirit
who brings life and love to us all.
We believe that the Church is one family,
and that one day
we will share everlasting life
with God in heaven.
Amen.



PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL – Te Īnoīnga o te Hunga Whakapono

(Here are some suggested intercessions; you are encouraged to compose your own according to the age and experience of the children)

Leader: With joyful hearts we come before our God with all our needs:

- For the Church, that it be a safe place where the weak grow strong. Let us pray to the Lord.
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- Where there is division and fighting in the world, that understanding and forgiveness will grow. Let us pray to the Lord.
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For the sick, the poor and the lonely that they will find healing and wholeness. Let us pray to the Lord.
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**
- For all those who suffer loss and grief, that they will find hope and comfort. Let us pray to the Lord.
R Lord hear our prayer or **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

Leader: O God, helper of those in need, look with kindness on us and those for whom we pray, we ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord

All: **Amen**

The children re-join the assembly before the prayers over the gifts.