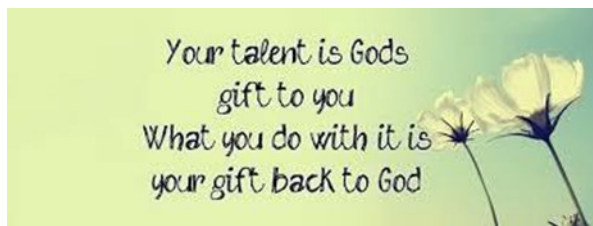




# DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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## Children's Liturgy of the Word



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## Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A

### Theme: God gives us talents and gifts

#### Summary

- † God gives us many gifts and talents. When we use them to serve God and the common good, we are genuine workers in the vineyard of the Kingdom of God.
- † The landowner has given his workers a fortune, and on his return, they must show that they had followed instructions and invested wisely.
- † A Jewish talent contained a substantial sum of money that would have bought an ox.
- † The coins in the story were not equally distributed.
- † We are each endowed with different 'talents' so that we can work together generously and share our abilities.
- † We each have responsibility for every one of our gifts – to use them rightly is to share in the joy of God's kingdom.

#### Objectives

- † To explore with children the correct use of our giftedness.
- † To define gifts according to their meaning during the time of Jesus.

#### Leader's Preparation:

- † Pray the Lectionary readings.
- † Prepare the Environment and Materials.
- † Review the background.
- † Reflect upon the reflection questions.

#### Environment and Materials

- † Two screened adult leaders.
- † Liturgical space.
- † Candle, table, liturgical colours, and any other visual aids.
- † Bookmark the readings in the Bible.
- † Place a Bible in a prominent location for the children to see when they enter the space.
- † Prepare any hymns that the children will sing as they gather in the space.
- † Select volunteers (older children or adults) to proclaim the readings.
- † Display the responsorial psalm refrain lyrics, if possible and desired.
- † Display the Creed, if possible and desired.

## Background

### Proverbs 31

- † The Book of Proverbs summarizes teachings about Wisdom, an attribute of God.
- † Wisdom is personified as a dynamic and caring woman concerned for her family and others in need.
- † Wisdom brings honour and happiness to those who seek her.
- † Lady Wisdom loves faithfully.
- † She demonstrates fear of the Lord as she increases goodness in the world and transforms the fruits of creation into materials that serve her family and the poor.
- † This expression of fear of the Lord leads her to fulfill the divinely given vocation to be a fruitful steward of God's creation.

### Matthew 25:14-15, 19-21

- † God entrusts various talents and abilities to everyone.
- † Christ is the landowner.
- † These may be special abilities, opportunities, or caring attitudes.
- † We have a duty to use our God-given talents in ways that foster goodness.
- † Like those faithful workers, our awe-filled fear of the Lord will lead us to gratitude in recognizing the gifts God has given us.
- † Our relationship with Christ is beyond any monetary value.

### Prayer Leader Reflection Questions

- † What gifts has God given you?
- † How do you use them in service of the kingdom of God??

### Reflection for Teachers and Leaders

Parents, teachers and leaders are often the ones who first notice new talents developing in children. Recognizing them and helping the children realize them as gifts from God to use for others helps them see God present within them. Encourage young people to identify God's gifts and use and develop them to love God and one another.

## The Liturgy

### Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

**Priest:** Dear children, God gives you special and unique gifts. You yourself are a gift from God. Take this time together to listen to God's Word. Go in peace.

One of the leaders carries the Book of God's Word, held high for all to see. The second leader assists by directing the children. When most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the place of the celebration. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the location of the celebration, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome.

The leaders assist the children to sit, welcome them and participate in the prayer.

The leader may say the prayer.

**O God, help us to understand your Word with open hearts and increase our faith. Through Christ our Lord.**

Invite the children to sit and listen to the readings.

## Lectionary Readings

One of the leaders (or an older child who has prepared the text) stands, takes the book from the table, stands behind the table, and proclaims the first reading. The reading ends with: The Word of the Lord. All respond: Thanks be to God.

**FIRST READING Proverbs 31:10, 12, 20, 26, 28, 31**

**A reading from the book of Proverbs**

**A good woman is more precious than jewels.**

**She does not hurt others;**

**she does good all the days of her life.**

**She helps those in need.**

**She speaks with wisdom and is kind to everyone.**

**Her husband and children call her blessed  
and tell her how wonderful she is.**

**May she be rewarded for all that she does, and may  
everyone who knows her sing her praises.**

**The Word of the Lord.**

The leader may teach the children to respond: Thanks be to God.

A period of silence follows the reading. Invite the children to think about some particular aspect of the reading during this time may be helpful.

Perhaps the gesture of bowing heads and closing eyes will foster the effective use of this silent period.

**GOSPEL Matthew 25:14-15, 19-21**

The children stand for the Gospel. The leader proclaims the Gospel.

✠ **A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.**

All respond: Glory to you, Lord.

All sign themselves on the forehead, lips and breast.

**J**esus told his disciples this story about the kingdom of God:

"The kingdom is like what happened when a landowner went away and put his three workers in charge of all he owned. The landowner knew what each worker could do. So he handed five thousand talents to the first worker, two thousand to the second, and one thousand to the third. Then he left the country.

"Sometime later, the landowner returned. He called them in and asked what they had done with his talents. The first worker who had been given five thousand talents brought them in with the five thousand he had earned. He said, "Sir, you gave me five thousand talents, and I have earned five thousand more."

"' Wonderful!' his master replied. 'You are a good and faithful servant. I left you in charge of a little, but now I will put you in charge of much more. Come and share in my happiness!'"

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

The leader concludes the Gospel with The Gospel of the Lord.

All respond: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The children sit to listen to the reflection.

## Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Please consider the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions.

In today's Gospel, Jesus talks about thousands of talents or coins a landowner gave three different workers. The word "talent" in the story represents a large amount of money, but "talent" represents much more for us.

### **Who do you think is the landowner in the parable?**

(God or Christ)

One of the workers earned the same amount that the landowner had given the worker. The worker used his gifts and talents as the landowner wanted.

### **Do you think that the owner was happy with the worker?**

### **What did he say to the worker?**

Everything we have comes from God. Our talents, or gifts, include all of our abilities. God wants us to use our gifts to spread goodness and not for selfish reasons.

### **Do you have a special gift or talent?**

Just as the word "talent" represents all of our gifts, the parable's ending has a deeper meaning. It teaches us not to be selfish.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess our faith. Together, sing or recite the Apostles' or Nicene Creed. Refer the children to the words of the prayer that you have displayed.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess our faith.

Together, recite the Creed.

## The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who became our brother and gave his life for us?

All: We do believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: We do believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

## Prayer of the Faithful

Invite the children to think of the needs of others and to announce their petitions. The leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. It may be necessary for the leader to repeat and/or paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: For this, we pray. All respond to each petition by saying: Lord, hear our prayer. Sample intercessions are below.

**Leader:** We listened to God's Word and now pray to our God who loves us. The response is: Lord, hear our prayer.

† That the love and peace of God will fill all who serve the Church.

Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.

† That the rulers of our nation, communities and schools will lead with wisdom and readiness.

Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.

† That God will heal the sick and give compassion to those who care for them. Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.

† *The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.*

† For all those who have died, God's eternal happiness will be their treasure forever.

Let us pray to the Lord. R Lord, hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Loving God, you invite us to bring all our needs to you. Listen to the prayers of your children, which we bring to you through Jesus Christ, your Son.

*The leader may invite other intercessions from the children or add intercessions based on the Church's current needs, the world, or the local community.*

*Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and perhaps think about what they have heard and are now doing.*

*Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.*

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