



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

Children's Liturgy of the Word EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Every good deed or word of kindness is more precious to God than worldly possessions can ever be. The readings for the Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, focus on how temporary life and possessions are. They urge and challenge us to pay more attention to spiritual wealth and what lasts forever, and move us away from a mindset that values only material wealth and short-term achievements. They remind us that human life is brief, earthly possessions are ultimately worthless, and it is essential to seek spiritual riches and align our lives with God's lasting plan.

CLoW faces the challenge of adapting the liturgy to lead children toward full, active, and conscious participation.¹ The readings, particularly the first reading, may pose a challenge for the children. You may want to focus on the second reading and/or the Gospel.

Self-Reflection Questions

- † Saint Paul urges us to "set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." What are some "things above" that you can actively seek in your life?
- † What is one concrete step you can take this week to shift your focus from earthly concerns to heavenly realities, in light of these readings?

¹ Directory for Masses with Children, 3; Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 38

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Background

Ecclesiastes reflects on the pursuit of material things. Life and its pursuits are short-lived, temporary, and often hard to understand. The reading emphasizes the frustration of working hard only to leave what you earn to someone who didn't work for it. The Teacher suggests that nothing we gain in this world has lasting value because everything will eventually be lost to death.

Psalms 90 compares human life to God's timelessness, where a thousand years feel like a single day. The psalmist asks for wisdom to "count our days" and gain a "wise heart," seeking God's kindness, love, and the success of their work.

Colossians encourages believers to live a transformed life focused on Christ and spiritual goals. Saint Paul tells those "raised with Christ" to "seek the things above, where Christ is." St. Paul urges us to think about heavenly matters instead of earthly ones, understanding that our true life is "hidden with Christ in God." As a result, believers should "put to death" destructive behaviours like greed (idolatry).

Luke presents Jesus' direct warning against greed through the parable of the rich fool. When asked to mediate an inheritance dispute, Jesus declines and cautions against "all kinds of greed," stating that "one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." He then tells of a rich man whose land yielded an abundant harvest. Consumed by his wealth, the man decides to tear down his barns to build larger ones, planning to store his goods and then "relax, eat, drink, be merry" for many years. However, God intervenes, calling him a "fool" and declaring that his life will be demanded of him that night, questioning who will inherit his prepared treasures. Jesus concludes the parable by stating, "So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

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: Jesus teaches us not to be greedy. What matters most is not how much we have, but how we have loved. Go with your leaders and listen to Jesus.

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 in sitting and preparing. **Begin with the Sign of the Cross.** Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may say the following prayer in these or similar words.

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, help us to recognize that everything comes from you. Help us to love you and our neighbours.

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, the Gospel is required.

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes.

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

Sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill
must leave all to be enjoyed by another
who did not toil for it.

This also is vanity and a great evil.

What does a person get from all their toil and strain,
their toil under the sun?

For their days are full of pain,
and their work is a vexation;
even at night their mind does not rest.

This also is vanity.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

The word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

R. Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

You turn man back to dust,
and say, "Turn back, you children of Adam."
For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past,
or like a watch at night. **R.**

You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers. **R.**

So teach us to count our days
that we may gain a wise heart.
Turn, O Lord! How long?
Have compassion on your servants! **R.**

Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,
and prosper for us the work of our hands. **R.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters:

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.

In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all! legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.

The word of the Lord.

At the end of the reading, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The word of the Lord."

Children: Thanks be to God.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

GOSPEL

The children stand for the Gospel. They sign themselves on the forehead, lips, and chest.

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." But Jesus said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?"

And Jesus said to the crowd, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."

Then Jesus told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."'

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

At the end of the Gospel, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The Gospel of the Lord."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Glory to you, O Lord.

Adapted Readings for Children

First Reading

Children may find the first reading difficult. Please consult your pastor.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes.

The teacher in the Bible said:

Sometimes people work very hard.

They make many things and get many things.

But when they die, they leave everything behind.

And someone else gets it all—even if they didn't work for it.

This makes people sad.

They worry day and night.

Even at bedtime, they cannot rest.

It doesn't seem fair.”

The word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

R. Lord, teach us to live your way each day!"

You have always been our home, O God,
from the beginning of the world. **R.**

Help us to know how short life is,
so we can grow wise and kind. **R.**

Each morning, fill us with your love,
so we can sing and be happy. **R.**

Second Reading

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians.

Dear children,
You belong to Jesus,
so think about the things in heaven.
That's where Jesus is—with God!

Don't focus only on things here on earth.
Try to live a good and holy life.
Say "no" to things that are wrong—
like being greedy or unkind.

Don't lie to each other.
Be kind and true,
because you are a new person in Jesus.
He helps everyone be part of one big family—
no matter who we are or where we're from.

The word of the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.

Gospel

The children stand for the Gospel, which the leader proclaims. They sign themselves on the forehead, lips, and chest.

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.

One day, a man said to Jesus,
"Teacher, tell my brother to share the family things with me."

Jesus said,
"I'm not the one to decide that for you.
But let me tell you something important:
Be careful not to want more and more stuff.
Life is not about having lots of things."

Then Jesus told a story:
"There was a rich man who had a big farm.
He grew lots and lots of food.
He had so much, he said,
'I will build bigger barns to keep it all!
Then I can rest and enjoy my life.'"

But God said to him,
"You are not being wise.
Tonight, your life will end.
Then who will get all the things you saved?"

Jesus said,
"This is what happens to people
who only care about things for themselves
and forget to be rich in God's love."

At the end of the Gospel, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The Gospel of the Lord."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Glory to you, O Lord.

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions. An excellent place to begin is the question:

What did you hear? Allow each child to respond to the Word of God in their own words. Then, begin a general discussion, building on their responses, using prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas.

Jesus tells us a story about a man who had a lot of stuff—so much stuff that he had to build bigger barns to keep it all. Imagine your toy box overflowing so much that you must get another...and another! Sounds fun, right? But let's take a closer look.

This man had a lot of food and things. Instead of sharing them or thanking God, he said, "I'll keep it all for myself! Then I can sit back, relax, eat, drink, and be happy!" But something surprising happened. God said to him, "Tonight your life will end. What good will all your stuff be then?"

Do you think this man was really happy?

Did he think about anyone else?

Jesus isn't saying it's bad to have things—he knows we need food, clothes, and even some fun things like toys and games. But Jesus wants us to know something deeper: What really matters is what's in our hearts—how we treat others, how we love God, how we share and help. Let me tell you a little story.

There was a girl named Sarah (choose any name – probably not of a child in the room) who had a huge box of crayons—every colour you could imagine! Her friend Maya (choose any name – probably not of a child in the room) only had a little stubby pencil. When it came time to colour a big poster in school, Sarah shared her crayons. Maya's eyes lit up! They worked together, and their poster turned out beautiful—and guess what? They both felt happy inside.

Sarah learned that sharing and caring made her richer than any box of crayons ever could.

God wants us to be "rich" in love, not in stuff. Every time you say something kind, help a friend, or pray for someone, you are building treasure in heaven. Your heart becomes like a treasure box full of goodness and joy!

The world may say, "Get more!" But Jesus says, "Give more, love more, trust God more." And when we do that—guess what? We find true joy. The kind that doesn't fit in a box, but grows in your heart.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith. Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

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: I believe.

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

All: I believe.

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

All: I believe.

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

Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. The leader may need to repeat and paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: we pray. All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: My dear children, let us pray to God, who loves us and listens to everything in our hearts. **R.**

Lector: For the Church, that all people will learn to love God more than things, we pray: **R.**

Lector: For our families, that we will be thankful for the blessings we have and remember to share them with others, we pray: **R.**

Lector: For all of us here today, that we will listen to Jesus, love one another, and share the joy of being God's children, we pray: **R.**

Lector: For those who have died, that they may rest with Jesus in heaven, we pray: **R.**

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children.

Leader: Loving God, thank You for hearing our prayers. Help us to live in your love and to remember that the greatest treasure is having you in our hearts. We ask all this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and think about what they have heard and are now doing. Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.

Liturgy adapted for Children.

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Acknowledgments:

LECTIONARY SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops 2500 Don Reid Drive Ottawa, ON K1H 2J2