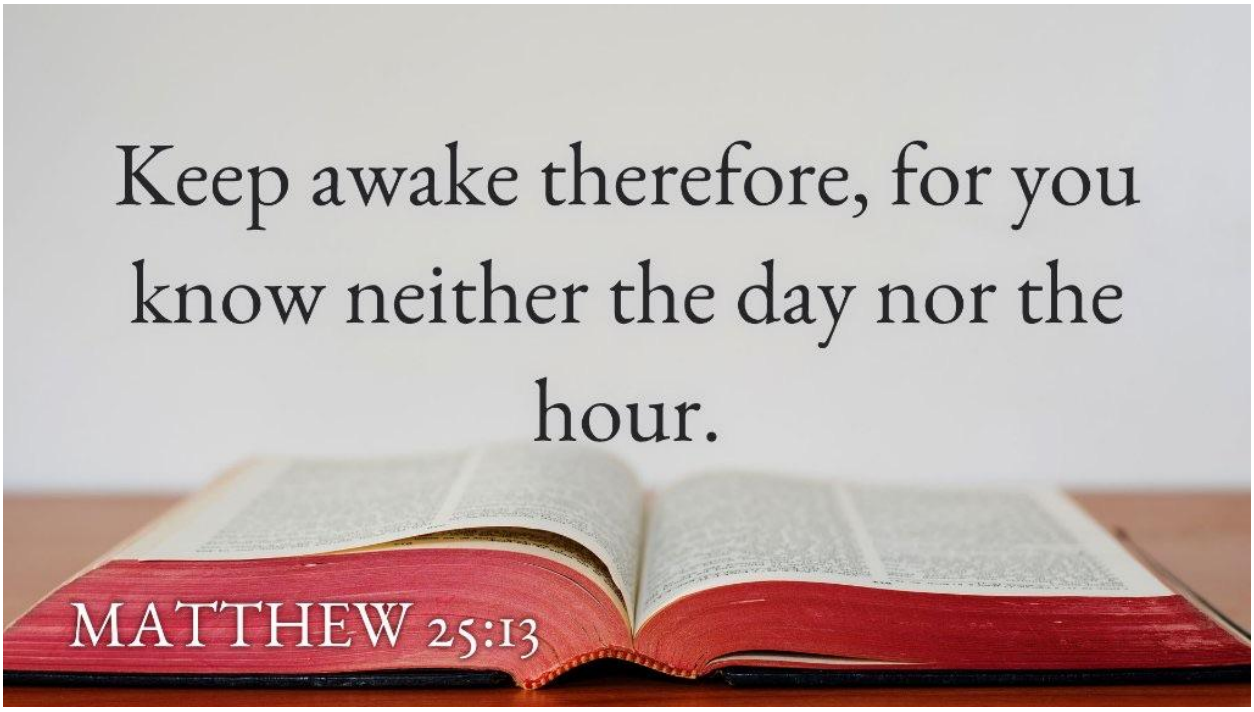
DIOCESE OF HAMILTON
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CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

Thirty-Second Sunday In Ordinary Time



Overview

On the Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, the readings encourage children to find God's wisdom, keep their hearts ready for Jesus, and live with hope. They teach us about being prepared—not by worrying about the future, but by choosing love and goodness in our daily lives.

The first reading describes Wisdom as bright and never fading. It tells us that those who seek and desire Wisdom will find her. For children, this means asking, "What is the loving and honest thing to do?" We can find God's wisdom by listening to Scripture, praying, asking a trusted adult for advice, and thinking about how our choices affect others. Wisdom means knowing how to choose what is good.

The psalm emphasizes God's presence and glory. At Mass, we gather to worship God, bringing our attention, thanks, and feelings to Him through prayer and song.

In the second reading, Saint Paul comforts those grieving a loved one's death, reminding them that Christians believe Jesus died and rose again. While it's natural to feel sad and miss someone, our faith allows us to grieve with hope, knowing that Jesus has conquered death.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells a story about ten bridesmaids waiting for a bridegroom. Some bring extra oil for their lamps, and some do not. The wait takes longer than they expected. When the bridegroom arrives, the ones who are ready go into the wedding feast. Jesus ends by saying, "Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Jesus teaches us to keep our hearts ready for him, as we never know when we will meet him. For children, being prepared might mean sharing, telling the truth, including others, forgiving, helping at home, or praying for those in need. Even small acts of kindness help prepare our hearts for Jesus.

The parable does not mean we should ignore helping others. Jesus teaches us to love and help. Instead, it reminds us that each person must learn to live with love; we cannot wait until the last minute to start choosing it. We prepare by practicing love every day.

Background

Wisdom 6:12–16 presents Wisdom as a precious gift that can be found by people who truly seek it. Its message is more than "be clever": it invites us to seek God's guidance and to be willing to learn what is good. Wisdom is described as "radiant and unfading," showing that God's truth remains a light for those who seek it. For children, seeking wisdom means asking what is right and loving, and being ready to listen and learn.

Psalm 63 is a prayer of someone who longs for God and trusts in his care. The psalmist remembers God's love, praises him, and describes God as a help and shelter. The image of a soul satisfied "as with a rich feast" expresses how deeply the person desires God's presence. The psalm teaches children that prayer can include both joyful praise and a simple, honest longing to be close to God.

1 Thessalonians 4 comforts a grieving people. Paul does not say that Christians should never feel sad; rather, he reminds us that grief is accompanied by hope because Jesus died and rose again. Paul's central promise is that those who have died in Christ will be with the Lord. He concludes by telling the community to encourage one another with this hope. Children can understand this as a reminder that we may miss people who have died, while still trusting in Jesus and praying for them.

Matthew 25:1–13 tells a parable about ten bridesmaids waiting for a bridegroom. The wise ones bring extra oil for their lamps, while the foolish ones do not; when the bridegroom is delayed, only those who are ready can join the wedding feast. Jesus uses the story to teach his disciples to be prepared for his coming. This does not mean staying awake all night or being afraid. It means living faithfully now rather than putting off a life of love and goodness. The lamp and oil are images in the parable; early Christian interpreters connected the lamps with the light of good works and stressed that readiness must be practiced in one's life.

Key Messages for Children

Keep your heart ready for Jesus. The wise bridesmaids were prepared when the bridegroom arrived. We can be ready by praying, trusting God, and choosing what good each day is—not by being afraid, but by staying close to Jesus.

Let your love shine through what you do. A lamp gives light when it is burning, and our love shines when we serve others: by sharing, helping, welcoming, or comforting someone sad.

Key Messages for Leaders

Help children seek God's wisdom. Explain that wisdom is more than knowing facts: it means listening for God's guidance and choosing what is good. Invite children to name a loving or honest choice they could make this week.

Show that readiness for Jesus means living with love. In the Gospel, the wise bridesmaids are prepared when the bridegroom arrives. Help children connect the story's readiness to everyday choices—sharing, helping, including someone, and praying—rather than to fear or staying awake.

Reflection Question

How can I help the children see that being ready for Jesus means choosing love and goodness in everyday life, rather than feeling afraid?

Focus

Be ready for Jesus by loving others.

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

At the proper moment, the priest invites the children to come forward. The leaders may come forward and stand facing the altar with the children. The priest then addresses the children.

Good morning! Today, Jesus tells us a story about ten bridesmaids waiting for a bridegroom. Some were prepared, and some were not. Jesus wants us to be ready to welcome him—not by being afraid, but by living with love each day.

Go with your leaders and listen to what these readings teach us.

We will welcome you back soon.

Once most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the celebration site. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the CLoW space, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome

The leaders help the children sit and prepare. **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 offer the following prayer, in these or similar words.

Let us quiet our hearts and make the Sign of the Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Silence for a few seconds.

Loving God,
help us listen to Jesus.
Show us how to live with love
and let your light shine through us.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, at a minimum, proclaim the Gospel.

Readings

A reader proclaims the approved readings below. The intent is to allow the children to listen to the original reading and help them better understand it (not replace it). Read at least the Gospel, then ask the children to sit down. You can then explain the readings. Leaders may not have time to read all the readings. A reader must always remain faithful to the original Scripture's intent, making it age-appropriate for children.

First Reading

Wisdom 6.12-16

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

Wisdom is radiant and unfading,
and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
for she will be found sitting at the gate.
To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding,
and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care, because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,
and she graciously appears to them in their paths,
and meets them in every thought.

The word of the Lord.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

Observe a period of silence after the reading.

Today, children meet many choices: whether to tell the truth, include someone, share, or ask for help when they are unsure. This reading reminds us that God's wisdom is like a light that helps us see the good choice. We seek it when we listen to God's word, pray, and learn from people who guide us toward what is right. Wisdom is not simply knowing lots of facts; it means learning to choose what is good and loving.

Ask: "When you are not sure what to do, who could help you choose what is kind and right?"

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 63.1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7

R. My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

O God, you are my God; I seek you,
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. R.

So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you. R.

So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.
My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips. R.

I think of you on my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. R.

The psalm speaks of someone longing for God as a thirsty person longs for water. In everyday life, we can feel that longing when we need comfort, courage, or someone trustworthy to listen. The psalm teaches that we can turn to God in prayer at any time: when we are happy, worried, thankful, or sad. Like a child reaching for a loving parent's hand, we can trust that God is close and cares for us.

Ask: "What is something you would like to talk to God about today?"

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters,
about those who have died,
so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.
For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
even so, through Jesus,
God will bring with him those who have died.
For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord,
that we who are alive,
who are left until the coming of the Lord,
will by no means precede those who have died.
For the Lord himself, with a cry of command,
with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet,
will descend from heaven,
and the dead in Christ will rise first.
Then we who are alive, who are left,
will be caught up in the clouds
together with them to meet the Lord in the air;
and so we will be with the Lord forever.
Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

Observe a period of silence after the reading.

Saint Paul addresses those mourning a loved one, encouraging open grief while holding onto the hope that death is not the end. He emphasizes God's care for those who have died in Christ. We can honour this by supporting the grieving, cherishing memories, and praying for the deceased, while comforting one another with hope.

Ask: “What could you say or do to help someone who is missing a person they love?"

Gospel

Matthew 25.1-13

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus spoke this parable to the disciples:
“The kingdom of heaven will be like this.
Ten bridesmaids took their lamps
and went to meet the bridegroom.
Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.
When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;
but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.
As the bridegroom was delayed,
all of them became drowsy and slept.
"But at midnight there was a shout,
‘Look! Here is the bridegroom!
Come out to meet him.’
Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps.
The foolish said to the wise,
‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’
But the wise replied,
'No! there will not be enough for you and for us;
you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'
And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came,
and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet;
and the door was shut.
"Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying,
‘Lord, lord, open to us.’
But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’
Keep awake therefore,
for you know neither the day nor the hour.”
The gospel of the Lord.

In Jesus' story, the bridesmaids must wait longer than they expected for the bridegroom. The modern-day lesson is that we cannot put off loving and doing good until some later time. We prepare to welcome Jesus through ordinary actions now: sharing, helping at home, welcoming someone who feels left out, or comforting a friend. Pope Francis explains that the oil in the lamps is not flashy but essential: love is prepared and strengthened little by little through service. The story is therefore an invitation to faithful living, not a reason for children to be afraid.

Ask: "What is one small act of love you can do today to help your light shine?"

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.

What did you hear?

Jesus tells us about ten bridesmaids It may be helpful/necessary to explain bridesmaids to some children who were waiting for a bridegroom. They each had a lamp. Some brought extra oil so their lamps would be ready when he came. Jesus wants us to be ready to welcome him.

Let's pretend to hold a little lamp in our hands. Invite children to cup their hands.

Can you make your lamp shine? Pause.

Our love can shine like a lamp. It shines when we do kind things: share a toy, help someone, or invite a friend to play. Jesus teaches us to be ready by loving others in our everyday lives.

What could you do if you see someone sitting alone? Pause for answers.

What kind thing could you do at home today? Pause for answers.

How can you help your lamp shine this week? Pause for a few responses.

Jesus is not asking us to be afraid or to stay awake all night. In the story, all the bridesmaids fall asleep while they wait. Being ready means choosing to love and follow Jesus each day.

Let's say together:

Leader: Jesus, help my light shine!

Children: Jesus, help my light shine!

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, concluding it with the cue for the response: 'We pray to the Lord.' All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: Let us bring our prayers to God. After each prayer, please respond: **"Lord, hear our prayer."**

1. For the Church, that we may share Jesus' light by loving and helping others.
   All: Lord, hear our prayer.
2. For children everywhere, that we may be kind, share what we have, and welcome someone who feels left out.
   All: Lord, hear our prayer.
3. For people who are lonely, poor, or in need of help, that they may find care and friendship.
   All: Lord, hear our prayer.
4. For anyone sad because someone they love has died, that God may comfort them and fill them with hope.
   All: Lord, hear our prayer.
5. For our families and parish, that we may keep our hearts ready for Jesus by choosing love each day.
   All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, thank you for hearing our prayers. Help us follow Jesus and let his love shine through us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Return to the church

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and reflect on what they have heard and what they are now doing. Be mindful of children who may have difficulty finding their families.

Please note that the Handouts are available at:

Bulletin: TheKidsBulletin.com – Goodwill donation suggested
Quiz Handout provided by: thewordthisweek.net

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