

Children's liturgy – Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year C)

Preparation of the worship space

Colour: white

Props: coloured paper or card, colouring pens and pencils

Song suggestions:

Peace is flowing like a river (902, Laudate)

Peace, perfect peace (597, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Make me a channel of your peace (898, Laudate)

Welcome: In today's gospel Jesus gives the disciples a very special gift – the gift of peace. Let's think some more about peace today.

Opening prayer: Dear God, help us to make our world a peaceful place so that all people can live free from the fear of fighting and war. We ask this through Christ our Lord and Prince of Peace. Amen.

First reading (optional): Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

Psalm: Psalm 66:2-3, 5-6, 8, r 4

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

Gospel: John 14:23-29

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Whoever loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and my Father and I will come to him and live with him. Whoever does not love me does not obey my teaching. And the teaching you have heard is not mine, but comes from the Father, who sent me.

“I have told you this while I am still with you. The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you.

“Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid. You heard me say to you, ‘I am leaving, but I will come back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father; for he is greater than I. I have told you this now before it all happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe.”

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

Gospel reflection: Today Jesus gives his disciples a very special gift. Can you remember what that gift is?

Jesus gives his disciples peace. And he tells his disciples not to be afraid.

Can you think of a time when you were fighting with someone? How did you feel?

Can you remember a time when other people were arguing near you? How did you feel then?

Can you remember a time when you stopped fighting with someone and made friends with them again? Or when the argument near you ended and the people forgave each other? How did that feel?

CAFOD is part of a family of Catholic charities around the world called Caritas. CAFOD is supporting their Caritas sisters and brothers to reach communities in need in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries.

Tamara is a mother from Ukraine. She has five-year-old twins and a baby daughter. She and her children had to leave Ukraine because of the war. It took them five days to reach safety in Poland.

How would you feel if you had to leave your home because of a war?

During this time Tamara and her children were very cold and hungry. But when they arrived in Poland, there were people waiting to help them.

Staff from Caritas took Tamara and her children into a tent where they could have a hot meal and get warm and they arranged for them to stay at a local school.

How do you think this made Tamara and her children feel?

This help has given them some hope after a long and difficult journey.

Children who are still in Ukraine are being helped as well. Caritas workers have set up places where children can go to feel safe.

Maria helps run art activities for the children to help them cope with what is going on around them. She says of the children "We try to play with them, paint together, just create a safe space and make contact. Many children start painting with black paint, really scary things. But then they start to add more colours."

Some other children around the world where there is lots of fighting or violence attend peace clubs which focus on sport, music or dancing to bring different children together somewhere safe and learn to live peacefully together.

This helps to build peace in their community.

How do you think you can help to build peace? Think about how you speak to and treat others who you disagree with, or how you could be friendly to someone who doesn't have many friends? What could you do to stop someone else from being

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unkind to others. Or how you could let people in power know that you would like to live in a peaceful world?

How will you share the gift of peace this week in your community? And around the world?

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

It is not always easy to live in peace with others, and so we pray together for God's help:

We pray for world leaders: that they may do all that they can to make the world a peaceful place for everyone to live in. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people around the world who live where there is fighting or war: that they may know peace. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may do all that we can to share the gift of peace with others. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Living God, may we bring the light of your peace to those we meet. Help us to find a peaceful way to solve our problems, so that the world may be a safer place for everyone to live in. Amen.

Activity suggestions

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration of a gift – the gift of peace – and to write or draw in it one or all of the following things:

- What peace looks like/means to them.
- How they will share the gift of peace over the coming week
- Who they will share the gift of peace with over the coming week

Give the children a gift-shaped piece of paper with the word "peace" written on it. Encourage them to write on it who they will share peace with over the coming week and what other things peace might bring with it eg hope, happiness, togetherness etc, so that they can see just what an amazing gift peace is!

Invite the children in your group to imagine that they are setting up a new peace club to encourage children from different faiths and backgrounds to come together and live peacefully. What activities would they do? Who would be welcome? What would be the rules of the club?

Encourage the children when they go back to their seats and make the sign of peace in Mass, to think about children around the world who live in a place where there is fighting, and who hope to build peace in their communities.

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Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in today's liturgy with the people at home, and to share their message or prayer for peace with their family during the week.

*Gospel passage taken from:

Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition)

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