



Education Kit

Refugee and Migrant Sunday 2006

Liturgy Notes

For use on or around 27 August 2006
(21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B)

Preparation - The key to good liturgy is thorough preparation. Adapt these notes to suit your congregation. Invite people of different ages, gender and ethnicity to prepare the sacred space, to participate in the Procession, to speak the Welcome, to be readers and to engage in any other tasks. It is helpful to notify these people in advance.

In many parishes a number of languages are spoken. Some of these could be incorporated into the liturgy, always respecting its structure and balance. A reading could be done in another language, and the English translation included in the bulletin or electronically. Some of the Intercessions could be translated into another language. Appropriate hymns in other languages could be sung.

The Church could be decorated with flags; there could be a large globe in front of the altar and/or a map of the world on a wall.

Entrance Procession - The procession could include people of different nationalities in national dress, bringing flags and cultural symbols (Don't forget the Australian and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags).

Welcome - Today is the day the Australian Church invites us to pray for refugees and migrants in our country. Some of us may be refugees and migrants, and certainly most of us are the descendants of refugees or migrants. Australia is a special place. Our population has a rich cultural mix, thanks to the refugees and migrants who have made this country their home over the years. Today, let us celebrate the richness of our nation, with its population drawn from various countries, races, cultures and religions. Let us pray that we can make this special place a sacred space. Let us resolve to be inclusive, to welcome the stranger, and to create a harmonious and multicultural nation that offers freedom, peace, democracy, acceptance and opportunity to all.

Gathering Rite and Opening Prayer

Leader: With respect and gratitude for the original custodians of this land, we gather together this morning to affirm in hope and faith that we can create a sacred space of welcome for all who live in Australia.

Let us pray:

God, You are the source of human dignity, and it is in your image that we are created. Pour out on us the Spirit of love and compassion.

Enable us to reverence each person, to reach out to those in need, to value and appreciate those who differ from us, to share the resources of our nation, to receive the gifts offered to us by people from other cultures.

Grant that we may always promote the justice and acceptance that ensures lasting peace and racial harmony. Help us to remember that we are one family.

Amen

Penitential Prayer:

God, you call us to be in relationship, building community with one another, working with one another, supporting and healing one another. Lord, have mercy.

God, you call us into a community working for the common good of all people, making choices that bring hope, justice, truth and freedom to our world. Christ, have mercy.

God, you call us into community with the whole of creation, always cherishing, nurturing and renewing the earth. Lord, have mercy.

Liturgy of the Word: Readings:

1. Roman Catholic Lectionary: Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18; Ephesians 5:21-32; John 6:60-69.

2. Australian Lectionary: 1 Kings 8: 22-30, 41-43; Ephesians 6: 10-20; John 6:56-69.

3. Alternate Readings: Genesis 1:26-31; Acts 2:1-8; John 4: 5-26, 39-42.

Sermon / Homily Notes:

Each set of Readings can be linked with today's celebration of Refugee and Migrant Sunday, as they invite us to respond to the Word of God by changing our way of thinking and even our way of being.

While our society and political climate encourages individual choice, as Christians we are invited to choose what is for the common good. Contrary to this invitation would be an attitude of self-centeredness, over-protection of our way of life, the exclusion of others from our nation, the preservation of our culture at all costs.

1. Roman Catholic Lectionary:

The three readings offer us a definite challenge to make choices that signify our fidelity and trust in God and in one another. Jesus and Joshua (these names are the same in Hebrew, and mean *Yahweh saves*) call on their listeners to make a choice, which eventuates in a profession of faith. Paul presents the readers of his Letter with the consequences of choice.

Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18 - Near the end of a life of leadership and service, Joshua gathers the twelve tribes of Israel and asks them whom will they serve, challenging them to renew their covenant with God. Remembering all that God had done for them, the people choose to serve the Lord and profess their faith: *We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God.*

Ephesians 5:21-32 - Jesus was totally obedient in his life and is the model for us in our relationships with one another. Relationships are lived out in equality, mutuality and total service to one another. They provide a space where every person is given dignity and respect.

John 6:60-69 Jesus knew that many of the crowd may have followed him because they witnessed the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Now Jesus invites them into a deeper intimacy with him. Eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus would be a measure of the profound and intimate bond that God has with his followers. Jesus asks his disciples to choose him as the very essence of life, but only "the Twelve" remain. It is Simon Peter who makes the profession of faith on their behalf: *Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know you are the Holy One of God.*

2. Australian Lectionary: The readings urge us to show fidelity and trust in God and reassure us in turn of God's faithfulness.

Ephesians 6: 10-20 Paul encourages us to use our spiritual armour in our pursuit of what is right. Persuasive influences operate from within our culture, inviting us to ignore the word and the way of God. Paul asks his readers to pray for him. It is a prayer we could pray for one another: *Pray that I may declare the message of the Gospel boldly.*

1 Kings 8: 22-30, 41-43 Solomon speaks of God's faithfulness to, and hearing the prayers of, those, including foreigners, who trust in God.

John 6:56-69 See comments under 1. Roman Catholic Lectionary for John 6: 60-69

3. Alternate Readings: Every person is created in the image of God and is of immeasurable worth and dignity. Made in the image of God, we are invited to model our behaviour on Jesus, the Word of God, who welcomed strangers, revealed a God who loves and offered them God's salvation.

Genesis 1:26-31 Man and woman are created in the image of God. This is Day 6 of Creation, and nothing else created has had a model. Until Day 6, God has just said: *Let there be...* But male and female are fashioned after God. We are all made in God's image, and deeply loved by God. That is the source of our human dignity.

Acts 2:1-8 From the beginning, Christians were challenged to embrace difference. At Pentecost, the crowds heard the Apostles in their own languages. The Spirit united them in faith in Jesus, but respected their cultural differences.

John 4: 5-26, 39-42 The hostility between Jews and Samaritans was due to socio-cultural and religious differences. Jesus approaches the Samaritan woman as a person and engages her in conversation. He speaks of himself as living water, water that quenches life's profoundest thirst. He is alive himself with the life of God and he draws men and women into the life that he is.

Prayer of the Faithful / Intercessions

Leader: Let us pray to the God who welcomes and provides for all, who hears our prayers and in whose image we are made.

- We pray for the Church: that Christ may be more visible in our commitment to serve God and all people and in our openness to continuous conversion to the Gospel and its loving concern for the poor. God hear us.
- We pray for refugees: that God's presence will give them comfort in their insecurity, and that our efforts will bring them hope and justice. God hear us.
- We pray for all who have made Australia their home. May they live in peace, happiness and prosperity. May we

all be enriched by the values, customs and cultures that we share. God hear us.

- Grant the people of Australia tolerance, openness and respect, so that we may welcome the stranger, offer support to those who have recently arrived, and give comfort to the homesick. God hear us.
- Help us to change our way of thinking, to stop protecting our standard of living at the cost of developing nations and their people's quality of life. Help us to live simply so that others may simply live. God hear us.

Leader: Welcoming God, hear our prayers for all who are made in your image and likeness. We make our prayer through Christ, Your Son. Amen

Sign of Peace: *Participants could be invited to offer one another a sign of peace, using their first language and traditional/cultural gesture.*

The Lord's Prayer: *Our Father could be said, and participants invited to pray it in their mother tongue.*

Final Blessing

God bless our eyes, that we may recognise injustice.

God bless our ears, that we may hear the cry of the stranger.

God bless our mouths, that we may speak words of welcome to newcomers.

God bless our shoulders, that we may bear the weight of struggling for justice.

God bless our hands, that we may work together with all people to establish peace.

God bless our hearts, that we may be transformed into witnesses of truth, justice and love.

All: Amen

Hymns

The Deer's Cry: St Patrick's Breastplate (from CD *The Pilgrim*, Shaun Davey). Who will speak: (from CD *Agape*, Marty Haugen). On Holy Ground: (from CD *Agape*, Marty Haugen)

Australian Hymn Book Numbers 391 ; 185; 431;72; 532

Together in Song , Numbers 690; 421

Sing Alleluia, Numbers 42; 63

Alleluia Aotearoa , Numbers 82; 44; 125; 59

Hymn Books:

As One Voice Volumes 1 & 2 – (has CDs/tapes); 2/1 Clap Your Hands All You Nations (John L. Bell & Graham Maule); 2/3 Christ Be Our Light (Bernadette Farrell); 2/139 Gather Us O God (Monica Brown)

Other Resources

The road to Emmaus: a pilgrimage on refugees. This is a pilgrimage on the theme of refugees and recognising Christ in the stranger. It can be adapted for group use. For a 12 page print-friendly PDF, see CAFOD's website: www.cafod.org.uk/resources/worship/liturgies_and_services/parish_liturgies/pilgrimage

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(with some editing and adding of hymns)**