**Children’s liturgy – Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)**

**Preparing for worship**

**Colour:** green

**Song suggestions:** When I needed a neighbour were you there? (800, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)
Let there be love shared among us (358, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone

**Welcome:** Today Jesus tells us that we must love our neighbour as ourselves. But what does this mean? Who is our neighbour and how do we show love for them? Let’s think a bit more about this today.

**Opening prayer:** Christ Jesus, show us how to share your love with our neighbours, both here and around the world, as you ask us to. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Deuteronomy 6:2-6

**Psalm:** Psalm 17:2-4, 47, 51, r.2

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

**Gospel:** Mark 12:28-34

A teacher of the Law was there who heard the discussion. He saw that Jesus had given the Sadducees a good answer, so he came to him with a question: “Which commandment is the most important of all?”

Jesus replied, “The most important one is this: ‘Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’The second most important commandment is this: ‘Love your neighbour as you love yourself.’ There is no other commandment more important than these two.”

The teacher of the Law said to Jesus, “Well done, Teacher! It is true, as you say, that only the Lord is God and that there is no other god but he. And you must love God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your strength; and you must love your neighbour as you love yourself. It is more important to obey these two commandments than to offer on the altar animals and other sacrifices to God.

Jesus noticed how wise his answer was, and so he told him, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.”

After this nobody dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

(*Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission\*)*

**Gospel reflection:** What do you remember from today’s reading?

Jesus tells us that there are two very important commandments that we should follow. Can you remember what they are?

The first is to love God. The second is to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Who is your neighbour? Can you each tell me the name of someone who is your neighbour? Why are they your neighbour?

Zin Thu Thu lives in a village in Myanmar. Everyone in her village works together to make sure everyone is cared for. They are very good neighbours. Some time ago, a very big storm hit the village causing a lot of damage and hurting a lot of people. The villagers didn’t know what to do. They were completely unprepared for what happened.

With the help and support of a local expert, funded by CAFOD, they were able to rebuild their village. More importantly, they have been preparing for what to do if a bad storm ever hits again. In Zin Thu Thu’s school, they even have lessons about how to keep safe in a storm.

You have neighbours in your street who live near you. If something happened in your street, you would probably all help each other.

Can you be neighbours with someone who lives such a long way away – like Zin Thu Thu in Myanmar? Is it just as important to care for people who you may never see?

All people around the world are made by God. And God loves us all very much. There is only one sun, one sky, one world. We share all these with one another. We are all part of one big global family. We are all neighbours.

Jesus asks us to love our neighbours. How do you think we can show love for our neighbours here? And how can we show love for our neighbours around the world?

To love our neighbour means to treat them as we would wish to be treated. How do you like other people to treat you?

We like others to treat us with respect, to help us when we have a problem and to share with us. So this is what we are asked to do for our neighbours, both here and around the world.

What will you do this week to show your love for your neighbours throughout the world?

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

God made us and loves us all, and so we pray with confidence together:

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may be a good neighbour to all people, welcoming them and helping and sharing with those in need. Lord, in your mercy…

We pray for our neighbours throughout the world: that they may have the chance to live life to the full, with all that they need. Lord, in your mercy…

We pray for our parish, our families and our friends: that we may share what we have with our neighbours so that all people may have what they need. Lord, in your mercy…

**Closing prayer:** God of love, bless our neighbours throughout the world. Help us to grow and learn in your love and to share that love with our neighbours as Jesus taught us. Amen.

**Activity suggestions**

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and to draw in the empty room either someone/some people they think of as their neighbours, or how they will love their neighbours in the coming week. They could draw or write the other option on the back of the sheet.

Encourage the children to write or draw ways that they can show love for their neighbours at home and beyond. Display these around a big picture of the world, to show that we are all neighbours.

Cut out heart-shapes from paper for the children and invite them to write or draw their neighbours on the heart, to show that they will love them in the coming week. Or invite the children to write a prayer for our global neighbours on the heart.

Remind the children to share all that they heard and thought about during the liturgy with the people at home during the week. If they have written a prayer for their global neighbours, encourage them to say it together at home during the week. Encourage them to try and do all that they can to show love for their neighbours.

Children can visit cafod.org.uk/kidzzone to find out more about their global neighbours. Including watching a video about Zin Thu Thu’s village in Myanmar.

\*Gospel passage taken from:

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

© 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved.

Anglicisation © The British and Foreign Bible Society 1976, 1994, 2004. The copyright for the derivative work of Anglicisation pertains only to the text within the Good News Translation (GNT) that British and Foreign Bible Society adapted for British literary usage, consistent with Section 103(b) of the United States Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 103(b).

Bible text from the Good News Translation (GNT) is not to be reproduced in copies or otherwise by any means except as permitted in writing by American Bible Society, 101 North Independence Mall East, FL 8, Philadelphia, PA 19106 (www.americanbible.org).

®