## RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE FOR A CHILDREN’S LITURGY SESSION

The website for the Archdiocese of St Andrew’s and Edinburgh **contains resources for understanding** Children’s Liturgy of the Word, **resources for planning** (indicating the gospel passage and alleluia verse for each week & places you can look for ideas/inspiration), and a **weekly plan** for each Sunday.

When you reach the homepage of the website click on the section ‘Archdiocese’. Scroll to the section ‘Catechetics’. Under this section you will find ‘Children’s Catechesis’ and an informative section on ‘Adult Formation’.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHILDREN’S LITURGY SESSION TEMPLATE** | | |
| **SECTION** | **INFORMATION** | **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE** |
| **Preparation** | The Leader and/or Reader should pray with the Gospel before the session. Ask yourself – what is happening here? What is it teaching about God? Heaven? How should I act? Try to distil it into a **one sentence message,** that connects the life of the child to the wisdom of God. This message will guide what you hope to share with the children.  Prepare resources ahead of the Sunday. Arrange room/area before the session begins. You will need a **bible/lectionary**, **crucifix**, **candles**, a **place for the lectionary/bible.** The session should reflect that of the structure of the Mass. If you plan to use an activity the materials should be ready for use before the session begins. | *If possible, a cloth of the colour of the vestment for that service could be used. A stand or pillow should be available to rest the Lectionary on. Thus, giving the Word of God due reverence.* |
| **Health & Safety** | Once you are all assembled take a head count. | *This is in case of the need to evacuate.* |
| **Introduction** | Begin with making the sign of cross.  Now give a brief introduction. Here you could state (or pose as a question) your one sentence message, to prepare the children to hear the Gospel. | *Sign of the cross is not* **strictly** **necessary** *as the children will have done so before leaving the congregation but gives children the opportunity to practice.* |
| **Introductory Rites** | *The introductory rites can be reduced in number dependant on the time for the session.*   * The Penitential Rite *this can be optional dependant on time*   The children could be taught how to the Kyrie Eleison, or you can say the following  ***Leader***: Lord Jesus, give us your peace, Lord have mercy  ***All***: Lord, have mercy  ***Leader****:*Lord Jesus you are our light and our guide, Christ have mercy  ***All****:* Christ have mercy  ***Leader****:*Lord Jesus, your care for us is never ending, Lord have mercy  ***All****:* Lord have mercy   * Gloria (sung/said outside of Lent)   *this can be optional dependant on time*  Glory to God in the highest,  and on earth peace to people of goodwill.  We praise You, we bless You,  We adore You, we glorify You,  We give You thanks for Your great glory.  Lord God heavenly King, O God almighty Father.  Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son,  Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  You take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us;  You take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;  You are seated at the right hand of the Father: have mercy on us.  For You alone are the Holy One,  You alone are the Lord,  You alone are the Most High,  Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  in the glory of God the Father. Amen.   * The Collect: *must be read* if the children leave the congregation before this is completed. | *Please note the instruction regarding the introductory rite from The Directory for Masses with Children (DMC) 40: It is permissible to omit one or other element of the introductory rite, which is completed by the opening prayer. In choosing individual elements, care should be taken that each one be used from time to time… none entirely neglected.*  *If the children leave after the collect, there is no need to repeat this.* |
| **Liturgy of the Word** | * The Gospel Acclamation must be read (outside of Lent the children could be taught to sing Alleluia here). * The Gospel should now be read. Take time so that the children can receive this. You might want to repeat the reading. *You must not paraphrase the Gospel.* | *Reading should be done from a Lectionary or a Bible (Children’s Good News Bible or ESV-CE).* |
| **Gospel Reflection** | The children should be encouraged to reflect on what they heard and share their ideas and thoughts. They should be given time and space to do this. Open questions such as ‘I wonder’ or ‘What did you hear in this reading’ may work better than a closed question. You could use Christian artwork to help with your delivery. You could end with a re-statement of the one sentence message. |  |
| **Creed** | *This is time dependant*. If there is time to recite this, the Apostles Creed can be used. Alternatively, a few lines of the Nicaean Creed can be recited to teach the Creed to the children. |  |
| **Activity** | This is time dependant. Resources to help can be found on our website. A very simple option: **“lets put down what we heard on paper!”** | *If used, it must reflect and enhance the Gospel message of the day.*  *The other sections must not be rushed in order to complete an activity.* |
| **Prayers of the Faithful (Bidding Prayers**) | These should be prepared in advance of the service, or the children could be asked to help by offering intentions that they might have. | *Suggestions are available on our website.* |
| **Closing Prayer** | This prayer brings the session to a close. The children should now be prepared to rejoin the congregation for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. | *Suggestions are available on our website.* |
| **Offertory** | Volunteers should be organised ready for the children to rejoin the congregation. |  |