# LSW

children

*before mass; we read the readings before mass to familiarise ourselves with the mass before it starts.*

*Most importantly, we make sure that we come to the meal clean and as this is a spiritual meal, we have to be spiritually clean. Discuss how we do that.*

Year B

##### Seventeenth Ordinary Sunday

**Images**

Helping at mass

**Points to note**

This week’s reading starts off a series of readings centred around the account of the feeding of the five thousand in Jn. For the next five weeks, the readings will be laden with theological themes of: the feeding (Sunday 17); true bread (Sunday 18); the person of Jesus (Sunday 19); Jesus as bread (Sunday 20); and accepting Jesus (Sunday 21).

While it makes sense to present them in such a cycle to adults, it is very difficult for children. I have therefore interpreted it as: preparing the meal (Sunday 17); what we eat (Sunday 18); who we eat with (Sunday 19); the wider church who shares the bread (Sunday 20); and what to do after the meal (Sunday 21).

In all instances, it is important to emphasise the personal and the everyday occurrences that children encounter at meals and parallel them with the meal for their spiritual world.

## Liturgy

### Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Your words are spirit, Lord,

and they are life;

you have the message of eternal life.

#### Gospel

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St John

(Jn 6: 1-15)

Jesus went off to the other side of the Sea of Galilee and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he gave by curing the sick. Jesus climbed the hillside, and sat down there with his disciples, it was shortly before the Jewish feast of Passover.

Looking up, Jesus saw the crowds approaching and said to Philip, “Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?” He only said this to test Philip; he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered, “Two thousand ringgit would only buy enough to give them a small piece each.” One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said, “There is a small boy here with five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that between so many?” Jesus said to them, “Make the people sit down.” There were plenty of grass there and as many as five thousand men sat down. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and gave them out to all who were sitting ready; he then did the same with the fish, giving out as much as was wanted. When they had eaten enough he said to the disciples, “Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing gets wasted.” So they picked them up, and filled twelve baskets with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves. The people, seeing the signs that he had given, said, “This really is the prophet who is to come into the world.” Jesus, who could see they were about to come and take him by force and make him king, escaped back into the hills by himself.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

###### Discussion

Has anyone helped prepare a meal before? *Get everyone into the preparation of a meal, even if they have never helped in one. What would they have expected if someone else had prepared a meal: table set, food cooked, plates cleaned, etc. Do a list of what needs to be done to prepare if necessary.*

Who helps with preparing the meal? Do you? *Talk about situations where the meal is to celebrate someone’s birthday or to welcome someone from far away. Are they more likely to help? Are they more likely to help if it is a birthday for someone they like?*

Doesn’t the family of God also have a meal together? Yes, the mass. *Draw parallels between the family at home and the family of God. There is a dining table (the altar table) with a table-cloth over it (the altar cloth). There is food on the table (the bread and wine) and lots of diners (the congregation). There are also people who have helped in preparing the mass just like people who helped prepare the meal at home.*

*Discuss the people who help prepare the mass:*

* *The cleaning lady cleans up the church.*
* *Somebody gets the priest’s vestments cleaned.*
* *There are altar ladies who arrange flowers at the altar.*
* *The priest prepares the sermon and the prayers.*
* *The choir selects the songs and practises them.*
* *Readers practise the readings.*
* *The commentators go through their sheets.*
* *Eucharistic ministers prepare to handle the holy hosts.*
* *The sacristan ensures enough bread and wine.*
* *Somebody makes sure that the sound system works.*
* *Altar boys put out the sacred vessels and the candles.*
* *The girls who project get their slides ready.*
* *Ushers help people to their places.*
* *And there is a co-ordinator who makes sure that all the above happens.*

What about us? How do we prepare for mass? *We make sure we have been good and have made peace with the people around us before we approach God’s altar; we say our prayers*