### LSW

children

us to worry. If there is a problem, we should do something to prepare for it. For example, if we are worried about the exams, we should study hard for it. Once we have studied as much as we can do, there is not much difference on the outcome that worrying can do. So, why worry. I hope we are not worrying for the sake of worrying. Are there people who worry about having nothing to worry about?

Once we have prepared as well as we can do, do we pray about it? Do we pray before (or even instead of) doing our best to prepare (like studying) or should we pray after doing our best? God wants us to go to him when there is nothing that we can do. Discuss also whether God will take care of us if we go to him in prayer.

What God wants of us is that we can accept whatever he has in store for us. I always find it odd for young people praying very hard for good results on the way to picking up their exams results. I mean, what do they expect God to do: change the pattern of the ink on the paper from D to A? No, we do not pray for things to happen; we pray more that whatever God plans for us, we are able to accept & deal with it and we continue to believe that it will all be for the better.

Year A

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Concepts

Being worried

Points to note

Again, as with all the other readings on the Sermon on the Mount, the readings tend to fragment into many small messages and we will have to choose just one in order to have a more focussed discussion.

There are two primary messages here. The first part centres around the line, “You cannot be the slave both of God and of money”. Here the Greek word used for ‘money’ does not refer to cash but rather to material goods. There are a lot of rich areas for discussion here.

The second centres around the line, “do not worry about tomorrow”. Great care needs to be taken that we do not give the message that there is nothing we need to do as God will take care of everything. Saying that we do not worry is more about saying that we leave the outcome of our efforts into God’s hands and his will be done.

I have chosen to focus on the second as the first message has been dealt with in other Sundays during the cycle.

Liturgy

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Your word is truth, O Lord,

consecrate us in the truth.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Explain that we are still with the Sermon on the Mount.

The Lord be with you.

All: And also with your spirit.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Matthew

All: Glory to you O Lord

(Mt 6: 24-34)

Jesus said to his disciples, “No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.

That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, not about your body and how you are to clothe it. Surely, life means more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? Can any of you for all his worrying, add one single cubit to his span of life? And why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his regalia was robed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the fields which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you men of little faith? So do not worry, do not say, ‘What are we to eat? What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?’ It is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these other things will be given to you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

This is the Word of the Lord

Dialogue

Have you seen when Mom or Dad gets worried? How do people look or act when they are worried? We could get some funny answers here. What happens to you when you get worried? Talk about the how stressed out they were. Did they look unfriendly? Did they do anything unfriendly? Did they do or say anything nasty to anyone?

Do you think the effects on people when you get worried about things is nice? Would people keep away from you when you get too worried? Discuss how people around them respond when they get too stressed from the worry. Did people avoid them? What would you do about it if you have no friends after getting too worried?

What do you get worried about anyway? Let the children talk of the things that they worry about. Spend some time on this. Highlight the especially more frivolous ones. Probe each of these cases and see if any of these worries actually happened. And if they did happen, did it make much of a difference? Margaret Thatcher once said that 90% of the things we worry about did not happen and of those that did, we could cope with 90% of them. This means that we worry 99% of the time for nothing.

What did you do when you get worried? Did all the worrying make much of a difference? There really isn’t much reason for