*Explain that that is the public aspect of the cleansing that we share with everyone else. Ask the children what else we could do. There is a private and (partly) private aspect to the cleansing. The private aspect is when we*

* *say our prayers before mass, either at home or after we turn up at church; and*
* *read the readings in the missal at home so we understand the mass when we attend it, etc.*

*And just like there is a social angle to washing up at home before the meal, there is social angle to washing up before mass. Would we be clean when we arrive at mass if we have been fighting with our brothers and sisters, or we have been naughty or disobedient, etc?*

That is why we have the confessions before the mass. *This is the (partly) private cleansing we do before mass. In this, we confess our serious wrongs that we have done and ask God for forgiveness and the priest will give us the sign that God has forgiven us.*

*If there is time, you can also note that just as those at home washes their hands before preparing our food, those at church also cleanse themselves before assisting as mass. They have a group prayer and will also do their own prayer at home.*

# LSW

children

Year B

##### Twenty-second Ordinary Sunday

## Images

Washing

## Points to note

We have just finished the series on the Eucharist that ran for the last five Sundays. While this reading is not about the Eucharist, it is related in the sense that we need to wash up before a meal and the Eucharist is a meal.

We can therefore begin the session with a throwback on what we did the last five Sundays. If there has been a break, you may need to amend your introduction accordingly.

## Liturgy

### Acclamation

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life:

you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

*Explain that Jesus is completing his journey through his home region of Galilee after having just completed many miracles and teaching many people.*

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark

(Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23)

The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered round Jesus, and they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. For the Pharisees, and the Jews in general, follow the tradition of the elders and never eat without washing their arms as far as the elbow; and on returning to the marketplace they never eat without first sprinkling themselves. There are also many other observances which have been handed down to them concerning the washing of cups and pots and bronze dishes. So the Pharisees and scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not respect the tradition of the elders but eat their food with unclean hands?” He answered, “It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture:

This people honours me only with lip-service,

while their hearts are far from me.

The worship they offer me is worthless,

the doctrines they teach are only human regulations.

You put aside the commandment of God to cling to human traditions.”

He called the people to him again and said, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean; it is the things that come out of a man that make him unclean. For it is from within, from men’s hearts that evil intentions emerge: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and make a man unclean.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

# Discussion

*You may wish to introduce by referring to the discussions on the Eucharist we had the last few Sundays.*

What is the one thing that you must do before you eat? *Well, there is saying grace and washing your hands. Put the saying grace aside for a while.*

Why do you need to wash your hands? *Highlight* *that other then the obvious hygiene reason, there is also the emotional and social element. Many people feel better if we were to sit at the dining table when we are clean. That is why people ‘freshen up’ before dinner. Some people even prefer to bathe before a proper dinner. There is also the social angle: would you like to sit to eat with somebody whose hands have not been cleaned, or who stinks badly because he has not washed after a football game?*

*Explain that saying grace is also a way of cleaning: just as we wash to clean our hands before eating we also clean our souls by saying grace. But because it is a physical meal, we do more physical washing than spiritual washing to prepare for it.*

If the Eucharist is a meal like we have been talking about these last few weeks, do we also need to wash up for mass? *Well, there is the* *physical side: we do try our best to arrive at church clean on Sundays. Some people even dress up well for mass. Hence the term, Sunday best, which has largely fallen into disuse of late (please don’t look at me when you say that to the kids).*

But just as we do more physical washing than spiritual washing before a physical meal, we do more spiritual washing than physical washing before the spiritual meal, the Eucharist. How do we do spiritual washing? Noticed thelittle tiny containers of water at the church entrances? Well, that is holy water that we bless and cleanse ourselves with before we enter the spiritually clean place for the spiritual meal. This holy water has been blessed at the Easter midnight mass.