



## Children's Liturgy of the Word

But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." — Matthew 19:14

### **What is Children's Liturgy of the Word?**

Children's Liturgy of the Word is a time of prayer and reflection on God's Word presented with child-friendly language and rituals.

### **Where does Children's Liturgy of the Word take place? What happens during CLOW?**

Children's Liturgy of the Word is offered weekly at the 5:00 PM Mass at St. John. Children in kindergarten – grade 2 from are invited to attend. **This is a drop-in program; no registration is required.**

Before the Liturgy of the Word, Father invites the children to come forward. The children leave the main church and assemble as a group in the rectory basement. Children's Liturgy of the Word begins with a prayer, followed by readings from the *Lectionary for Masses with Children*. (The *Lectionary for Masses with Children* has been prepared and approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Apostolic See.) The CLOW ministers engage the children in reflection on the Word, a children's Creed, and Prayers of the Faithful. The children return to their parents at the Offertory and join the community in celebrating the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The children are away from the congregation for approx. 20 minutes during the Liturgy of the Word.

### **What is the purpose of Children's Liturgy of the Word?**

In the Children's Liturgy of the Word ministry, we seek to show the children that they are important participants in the Liturgy of God's Word. Our aim is to make the children's experience of church meaningful while helping them to grow in faith and develop as full and active members of our Parish Community.

### **Who benefits from Children's Liturgy of the Word?**

CLOW is a wonderful, rewarding experience for everyone involved: the children, who hear and respond to God's Word in language they can understand; their families, as they discuss the readings together after Mass; and the leaders who answer God's call to share their faith with our children!

### **Who runs CLOW? What do leaders do?**

Children's Liturgy is run by parents and adults from St. John parish who love to share their faith with the children. Leaders are Virtus certified. We use a variety of resources that are provided by the Religious Education Office. New leaders go through a training session and are paired with experienced leaders who offer support and guidance.

A Children's Liturgy leader does not teach in the traditional sense. She or he is a facilitator and a co-liturgist, sharing the living Word. The main purpose of CLOW is listening to, reflecting on, and responding to the Word of God. As such, leaders facilitate question and answer sessions designed to encourage the children to respond imaginatively and emotionally to the Gospel stories.

### **What is the child protection and safety plan for Children's Liturgy of the Word?**

This ministry is committed to providing a safe environment for all. CLOW leaders and aides, 18 years and older, are Virtus certified and have completed an abuse prevention program. The children stay with their group and are attended by several trained adults and teen volunteers. Children are never alone; they may not leave the room to go to the restroom or to get a drink of water. If a child wants to go to the restroom, is having a hard time listening, or just wants to go back to his or her parents, the coordinator will return the child to his or her family, who can see to the child's needs.