

Methodist Church in Fiji

Young People's Department and Sunday School

Sunday School Week

7 – 14 April, 2019

- Topics:
1. Spiritual Upbringing of youths
  2. Use of Information Technology
  3. Substance Abuse

## OPENING OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL WEEK

To start of the week, invite a Pastor [Talatala] or a member of the congregation to speak on the topic: "Spiritual Upbringing of Youths, Use of Information technology and Substance Abuse" to open the week for the young people.

Reading: Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 127; Luke 2:41-52

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### MONDAY: 8/4/19

**Reading:** Luke 2:22-24

**Topic:** Parents to be spiritually grounded first.

**Leader:** Father

**Summary:** An important role of parents is their spiritual upbringing. Strong spiritual upbringing starts with us parents before it is shared with our children.

Today's **reading** shows the presentation of Jesus by His parents, Joseph and Mary to the Lord.

### Questions for discussion

1. What is the role of parents that is highlighted in the reading?
  2. What can we do to firmly establish this role?
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### TUESDAY, 9/4/19

**Reading:** Luke 2:52

**Topic :** Parents need to be models of a Christ like life

**Leader:** Mother

**Summary:** In today's reading, we see the full and total development of Jesus, physically, mentally and spiritually, "Jesus grew both in body and wisdom,....."

### Questions for discussion

1. How did Jesus obtain wisdom?
  2. "Jesus grew both in body and wisdom."  
How can we notice this 'growth'[body and wisdom] in our family?
  3. How can we help families which do not have this full growth : wisdom and body?
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### WEDNESDAY 10/4/19

Reading: Exodus 2: 12 ; Ephesians 6:1-3

Topic: The success of a young man or woman rests on his/her honoring his/her parents

Leader: Youth member

Summary: The two scriptures point to the blessings of one's life starting in the home. Honoring of one's parents is achieved through respect and obedience.

This theme is timely as we are often reminded these days of Children's Rights.

### Questions for discussion

1. What does "respect" mean to a parent, and to a child/youth?
  2. How can we maintain "respect" in these trying times?
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### THURSDAY,11/4/19

Reading : Psalm 127, 128

Topic: Spiritual Upbringing begins in the home

Summary: It will be good if we all attend the service as a family –parents, youth, Sunday school, and we sit together in our family groups to discuss the question

below. The two psalms stress the importance of laying a good foundation at the family level

### Discussion

Let us discuss in family groups the 3 issues that make up the Theme for 2019, plus tonight's theme. And let us come up with solutions of how to tackle these issues

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### FRIDAY, 12/4/19.

It is requested that Friday is set aside for our children to do rehearsal for their Palm Sunday program.

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### SATURDAY, 13/4/19

Getting things ready in the church for the Sunday service

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### SUNDAY , 14/4/19

#### Early Morning Service

**Leader:** Call to worship –Psalm 121:1-8 [class4, Age 9yrs]

Hymn - 377 [ Torovi Jisu Gone lalai] -Come to the Savior

Prayer: Four children to take part

1. Praise
2. Thanksgiving
3. Confession
4. Intercession

Reading: Psalm 127:1-6 [to be recited by a cl.3 student]

Hymn - 374 [Jerusalemi sa laurai] The morning Breeze softly blow.

Intercessory prayers: Three children to pray for:-

- SICK CHILDREN
- THOSE IN THE CORRECTION CENTRES
- ORPHANS

Hymn – 378

Leader- Closing Prayer and Benediction.

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### MID MORNING SERVICE

10.45am

1<sup>st</sup> Hymn: To be chosen (sere ni curu mai)

**SKIT** - [Pre school to class 4 to take part]

Those taking part are to assemble at the front door of the church.

4 children are to stand in the middle of the church.

At the end of the first Hymn,

1<sup>st</sup> child enters and shouts and asks:- Hey what are you people doing?

2<sup>nd</sup> child: Don't you know? We are waiting for Jesus who will pass through this way

1<sup>nd</sup> child: Who is Jesus?

2<sup>nd</sup> child: You do not know Jesus?

3<sup>rd</sup> child: People have said that he will be our King. He is the son of God, and He will set us free from the Romans.

1<sup>st</sup> child: Oh! Set! I know he is big and powerful.

4<sup>th</sup> child: Pick up a palm branch to wave to Him when he comes.

He is coming from Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover

2<sup>nd</sup> child :I cannot see anything nor do I see Jesus but I can hear shouting.

3<sup>rd</sup> child: What are they shouting for?

**A Lady** [joins in the discussion] .They are shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed are those who come in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to the highest." "Hosanna" means 'Save Us'.

4<sup>th</sup> child Look, Look I can see Him .He is riding a donkey

1<sup>st</sup> child: Yes, Yes, But why is He riding on a donkey? Shouldn't a king ride a horse?

4<sup>th</sup>child: Do not talk like that. The King of Kings is coming. Look , look, He is coming.

**Jesus' party arrives at the Temple –Jesus riding on a donkey followed by the disciples shouting, "Hosanna! Hosanna!"**

1<sup>st</sup> child:I feel pity on Jesus. He looks tired and sad .I know He is a loving man.

**The whole group shouts out, "Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he that walks in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to the highest!!**

**[They then go back to their seats]**

Leader: Prayer and a general welcome to the congregation

Class 3 participant- To recite Psalm 123.

Hymn : Jesus loves me this I know

Prayer : 4 children to pray

Hymn : to be chosen

Class 4 –To recite their memory verses

**A member of the Sunday School : Welcomes the congregation**

**Steward:** Announcements and free will offering followed by offertory prayer

**Pre- school and class 1students:** to recite their bible verses

**Congregation :** A member to respond to the words of welcome

Reading: Genesis 1:26-28, Ps 127, Luke 2: 41-52.

**Item song** –Sunday School

**Recite :** Psalm 124- Class 7

**Sermon:**

**Hymn :** I think when I read that sweet story of old.

**Prayer and Benediction**

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### EVENING SERVICE

Sere ni Curu mai

**Leader:** Welcome.

**Call to worship:** Psalm 27 to be recited by class 5

**Hymn :** Open the door for the children:

**Prayer:** by 4 children

**Anthem:**

**Recite :** class 8 and class 4[15+]

**Vote of thanks:** member of congregation

**Reading:** John 16:1-13

**Hymn:**

**Drama:** A blessed life starts at home

**Hymn:** God be with you till we meet again

**Prayer and Benediction -Talatala**

### **SERMON- 10.45am**

**Theme:** Spiritual upbringing of youth, Misuse of Information Technology and Substance Abuse.

**Readings:** Gen.1:26-28, Ps 127, Luke 2:41-52

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them .And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” [Gen.1:26-28] English Standard Version.

In his great wisdom, God created man to fill the earth. He created a man and a woman and blessed them. He created the first family to be in his own image .God also placed in this first family the role of supervision and careful stewardship of all God’s creation.

This family, created and blessed by God, had clear roles and rules, and food to sustain them. Life was complete and wholesome when they were under the oversight of God .Especially when the relationship between them and God was



properly maintained. Unfortunately God's plan for them was short lived when sin entered their lives .They therefore lost the image and characteristics of God. They then tried to find peace and satisfaction through their own efforts and not God's. Living in sin, they then tried to carry out the role God gave them.

The first family's role of having children, filling the earth, subduing and supervising His creation, were then carried out when they were living in sin and disconnected in their relationship with God.

What is the end result of all this?

All it brings is a broken life, despair and ruin.

Whatever we do, if we do it in the absence of God, will come to nothing, naught.

In the Bible, the offering of Able and Cain, and the building of a tower in Babel are good examples of what happens when we carry out tasks without reliance on God.

### **1. The main problem in the world today is Man's non reliance on God.**

The advent of the 21<sup>st</sup> century brings with it many changes .The changes are a result of improvements and developments through the ages.

In his quest for a better life, man has flown into space, used up his land resources and excavated or dived deep into the ocean depths.

In this continual search, man is merely continuing the work done by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after they committed the first sin. Gen.3:7 ".....and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths".

They made themselves something new to protect them and made them comfortable. When God visited them, they were wearing fig leaves .When God called out to them, they hid themselves because they were afraid.

Gen. 3: 21 "And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin and clothed them"

God made them a change of clothes. God gave them a better item to wear from the ones they had made. This clearly shows God's everlasting love to all of us sinners .

Many scary things are happening around the world today .

These include the stockpiling of weapons, terrorism and upheavals in hot spots, poverty, diseases that cannot be cured, effects of climate change such as hurricanes ,earthquakes, floods, tsunami and famine, abuse of women and children, rape, teenage pregnancy, divorce, increase in crime, corruption and substance abuse.

The abuse of Information technology in social media leading to idling away of time e.g. children playing games instead of doing their home work, getting engaged in pornographic activities and horrific behavior never encountered before.

All these issues listed above are a result of our search for new and better things when we do not involve God in our lives.

Not only is the environment damaged, our life, as an individual, family, or as a group, is badly shaken.

The main problem that besets us all is our TURNING AWAY FROM GOD.

We rely on our own wisdom, strength and achievements making us bold enough to push God away from our life.

The Bible is quite clear in warning us to stay clear from a life in which God is absent.

Jeremiah 17:5-6 "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength and, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert and he shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places in the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land"

In the second Bible reading, Psalm 127:1 says "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain".

Let us wake up, let us not wait any longer, otherwise, destruction and ruin will be our fate.

Where do we start? There is no better place to start than from HOME.

## **2. CHRIST needs to be the Foundation in the Home.**

**Let us rebuild our home with Christ. This year's theme has been chosen to awaken us all to the many problems that we encounter within our family and society. We believe that early spiritual upbringing in the home is the solution to all our problems.**

Every day we hear cases of substance abuse. Some are caught in cultivating the plants, [marijuana or Indian hemp] because of its quick and high return. Some sniff glue and other drugs as a way of escape to find peace. Others are caught in the web of substance abuse through following the mob or their peers [peer pressure]. It is painful to see the destruction of such lives. Another challenge is the re habilitation of these people to usher them back to normal lives. It is very expensive.

The misuse of modern information technology to communicate with others such as the use of mobile phones and other devices is becoming a huge problem in the country today.

Substance abuse is legally unlawful but the abuse of modern information technology is not.

We can see scenes from all over the world in our homes and children spend a lot of time playing games or surfing the web on the phones or tablets.

We cannot completely dismiss Information Technology as a negative force as it has a lot of positive influences such as quickening our communication with a

touch of a button. However its lack of control, misuse and abuse, has resulted in more problems in our society.

We the youths of today are called “techno generation” or “dot.com generation”.

This shows our close relationship with these technical devices and applications.

We are easily attracted to them and feel at home with them.

This means that although we are physically with our parents at home, our mind and concentration are far from home. This has led to lack of respect and obedience at home and elsewhere.

We have seen the changes in our behavior and how we relate to each other with the advent of the social media .Grandparents, parents and the children at home are busy using their smart phones to see what is in the face book and playing computer games that they do not have quality time talking and sharing with each other at home.

To our parents and guardians, the only lasting solution to these problems is

JESUS CHRIST.

We therefore ask that you, our elders to provide strong spiritual guidance to us youth and children.

A pertinent saying here is “what a generation narrates, the next will embrace”. What we, the young generation hear and see from you, our elders, we will continue to propagate.

We therefore ask that you, our elders and parents, continually show us in word and deed, the qualities of Christ. Because if a child is given a firm Christian upbringing at home, he will be able to lead a successful life.

Proverbs 22:6 says “Train up a child in a way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it”

3. **The third and final point** –The family has been blessed by God to be a place where children are taught to be obedient.

A successful life is usually the result of good upbringing by the parents coupled with an obedient and responsive attitude from the child.

In our third lesson we see how well the duty of the parents and the duty of the child complement each other in the household of Joseph and Mary. Their family is built around the will of God. They obey and follow God's will. They are religious and totally rely on God. They give their best in bringing up Jesus in their home.

On returning after the Passover, Joseph and Mary could not locate Jesus, so they walked back to Jerusalem where they found him. Joseph and Mary did very well in bringing up Jesus. In fact the way they raised Jesus, grounded on a strong spiritual foundation, is a model Fiji badly needs right now.

In our third lesson, Luke says, "So Jesus went back with them to Nazareth, where he was obedient to them" Luke 2:51

Luke used the word OBEDIENT to explain how Jesus behaved in his household. And the word 'obedient' is closely associated with being humble, patient, and being a good listener.

At 12 years of age, Jesus was showing his obedience by being around his parents and being ready to carry out any of their wishes.

To my fellow members of Sunday School, we need to follow Jesus' example in being obedient to our parents. Listen to them and honor them.

### **Conclusion**

The solution to substance abuse and misuse of information technology is found in the home when the roles of parents and children complement each other.

Our family should be based on Christ. It is the only foundation which is permanent and unshakeable. God should come first in the life of parents and children.

To our parents, the raising of your children should be based on Christ and Christ alone.

To my fellow members of Wesley Sunday School, the teachings that we get from our parents, our church elders and other elders in our family are to be followed. We need to be good listeners and be obedient. Let us not be easily swayed by the sweet ringing tones of our smart phones. Instead let us honour

and respect our parents and be obedient to them as they represent God here on Earth.

I quote Ephesians 6:1,4: "Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do." [1], "Parents do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead raise them with Christian discipline and instruction". [4]

May God continue to bless our homes and families as we together continue our fight against the scourge of substance abuse and the misuse of information technology.

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## DRAMA FOR PALM SUNDAY

### A LIFE BLESSED BY GOD STARTS IN THE HOME

Introduction;

This drama is based on John 6: 1-13.

The striking feature of this text is the Lord's feeding a crowd of 5000 with 5 barley loaves and 2 fish.

We invite our parents to join us as we journey through the story in this text

John 6 :1 -13.

The story tells of how Jesus, through a miracle, fed 5,000 men [ women and children were not counted].

Members of the congregation, this boy, Luke, has two fish and five barley loaves. Let us watch and see the setting in Luke's family before this miracle took place.

Things to be prepared.

*A scene inside a house .Luke and mother sit together. Church clothes, Bible, Hymn book. Luke's father joins the two with bible and hymn book. They can sit around the table, facing the congregation.*

[ CURTAIN OPENS]

### Scene 1

#### Father [ Sitting]

God has been good in our life, as a family. I wish to thank you Luke and mum. I notice that when I arrive for our family devotion, you are already waiting for me. You happily sing hymns and choruses and pray. All these brings peace and happiness, and confirms to me that God is always with us.

Thank you Luke, for your obedience and respect. Thank you Mum for being diligent in your prayer life and in closely following the word of God. Our God does not sleep or slumber. He watches over us and always answers our prayers.

Let us pray [Luke's father offers a short prayer]

Luke :Tunes a hymn [388]

Father: Let us stand, place our right hand on our chest and recite Exodus 20:12.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the lord your God is giving you."

[This commandment should be put to practice.]

Thank you, let us pray.{short prayer}

AMEN

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close the curtain

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## SCENE 2

It is after dinner and Luke and his mother are doing some clearing up in the kitchen.

[Outside, Luke's father is getting ready to go fishing with his fishing line, bait, bottle of water and some food and oars etc]

**Father:** Luke, will you please come outside for a minute.

**Luke:** What is it Dad? Ready to go fishing? Can I join you in one of your trips ?

**Father:** Yes, of course. Right now I want you to be with mum at home.

I called you because I want you to tell me the seven things you should do when you get up in the morning. You are getting big. You are 12 .You have been doing these seven things since you were five. What is important in the sight of God is obedience and respect.

**Luke:** Dad, I usually look forward in doing these seven things in the morning.

1. Make my bed
2. Wash my face and brush my teeth
3. Go to my bed, kneel and pray
4. Fill all containers with water from the well
5. Put on the kettle over the fire
6. Excuse myself from mum and run down to the beach
7. With the arrival of the punt, separate the small fish from the big ones. I take the small ones to Mum then leave with Dad to sell.



**Father:** Thank you son .Be sure to keep that routine and be obedient to us. The bible records the truth always. We will be blessed and live a long and prosperous life.

I am off. See you in the morning.

**Mother:** Your food for your fishing trip, Dad.

**Luke:** Bye Dad, see you in the morning.

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Close the curtain

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### SCENE 3

#### Things that are needed

1. Inside the house, beds for Luke and his mum [blankets, sheets, pillows]
2. Toothbrush and toothpaste
3. A big drum full of water [to be the well] a small container with string attached for drawing water from the well, 2 small empty buckets.
4. Fire place [firewood,kettle]
5. Small basket to hold small fish

**Narrator:** Luke gets up in the morning and starts to do the seven duties he was taught to do from when he was 5 years old. He is now 12.

**Luke:** [Gets up and stretches himself] Good morning God the Holy Spirit.

[While facing the congregation, in silence, he continues to act out each step.]

Makes his bed; goes outside and washes his face and brush his teeth;  
kneels beside his bed and prays; Draws out water from the well[drum] and  
fills the 2 empty buckets; Puts the full kettle on the fire place.]

Good morning Mum, A beautiful morning. Am going to wait for Dad down  
the beach [has a biscuit in his hand]

**Mother: Morning Luke. Yes, it is a beautiful morning.** Hurry down to the beach.

[Luke waits for a little while, plays with the sand. The fishing boat arrives]

**Father: Good morning son.** Thank you for waiting. Come and sort out the fish.

Be quick and take some small ones for breakfast.

**Luke:** Dad the big ones are there. Best of luck for your sale.

[takes the basket of fish home]

\_\_\_\_\_ close the curtain \_\_\_\_\_

#### SCENE 4

**Items needed:** Kitchen, frying pan, salt, cooking oil, a loaf of bread, and a bread  
knife.

**Mother:** Dad, you always catch a lot of fish. Thank you Lord for your provision.

Go on, have your shower and get ready for breakfast.

**Luke:** Mum I have seen a lot of people moving across in one direction. Some,  
elderly and young alike, are carried in their beds. Just what is happening?

**Mother:** Son they are all going to Jesus

**Luke:** The Messiah, the Son of God?

**Mother:** Yes, in the nearby mountains. The story of the miracles that he performed has spread like wild fire.

**Luke:** Miracles?

**Mother:** Yes the blind can now see, the deaf can hear,

the demon possessed delivered, the cripple healed, and the dead resurrected.

**Luke:** I want to go and see and hear Jesus. Please Mum can I go?

**Mother:** You can go but since dad is still out, you will have to go alone.

**Luke:** Thank you Mum

**Mother:** Hang on for a while. I will put together your lunch. Two fish and five barley loaves.

**Luke:** That's plenty. Thanks Mum .I am leaving now. Remember me to Dad.

[goes outside and bids good bye to his mum]

**Draw the Curtain**

## **SCENE 5**

Items needed:-

1. Bread to be cut up in pieces to be given to the crowd [no fish]
2. 12 small baskets or containers to store leftover food.
3. Members of the Sunday school to form the crowd and to wear turbans
4. Jesus' disciples to wear coats and turban.

**Narrator:** Luke finally arrives at the place where people are assembled. The place is so packed that he finally sits at the back of the crowd.

**CURTAIN IS RAISED.**

**Reader:** To read Matthew 5:3-16 - Sermon on the Mount- slowly and loudly from behind the Pulpit.

**JESUS:** with hands outstretched, walks across the stage and back, till the end of the reading.

He offers a short prayer remembering the crowd.

**Peter.** : Lord, the people are just milling around and jostling for a place

**Jesus:** Make the people sit down. It has been a long day and many have travelled from afar. Ensure that they have some food.

**Philip: Lord,** where do we get the money for their meal? This crowd is so big that one's annual salary is not enough to buy them their meal.

**Jesus:** Look for some food for them to eat.

**Andrew:** [bringing Luke to Jesus] Lord here is Luke from Bethsaida with his lunch pack.

**JESUS:** Thank you Luke.[Jesus said a short prayer remembering Luke also]

Amen. Distribute the food to the people.

**Peter:** Lord they have all eaten and are full. And there is left over bread and

And fish

**JESUS:** Gather whatever is left over, let us not waste any. Let the people leave for their homes.

CURTAIN TO BE DRAWN

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## SCENE 6

Items needed:

1. 12 baskets or containers
2. All baskets filled with leftover bread.
3. A chair where Jesus is seated with the 12 disciples beside him with the twelve baskets of leftover food

Narrator: The crowd have eaten and are full. In the crowd are 5000 men, not counting the women and children. People go back to their homes after witnessing the many miracles of people being healed and made whole. After having their fill, twelve baskets are filled with the leftover.

CURTAIN OPENS

Philip: Lord here are 12 baskets with the leftover bread and fish.

Andrew: We have sent them away. They are all amazed at the miracle of the feeding of the big crowd.

Jesus: Yes, Andrew. You will perform more miracles because you have faith in the Lord

The 12 disciples: Lord what do we do with these 12 baskets of food?

Jesus: Andrew, who is the boy whose lunch was used to feed the large crowd?

Andrew: Luke from Bethsaida

Jesus: Let each of you take a basket and we will take them to Luke's house

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## SCENE 7

Items to be prepared

3 vanguard sheets and in each is written in big and bold figures

1.  $5+2=7$

2. 52

3. 12

**Narrator:** Luke gets back home. He is excited and tells his parents how Jesus miraculously used 5 barley loaves and two fish to feed the big crowd of 5000 people. **The 3 offer a prayer of thanksgiving affirming the goodness of serving the Lord and being obedient to His word.**

**Jesus and his 12 disciples arrive at the house.**

#### **Curtain is Opened**

**Luke:** Mum and Dad, just look outside. There's Jesus and His Disciples.

**Father:** [goes outside] What a momentous day?

**Mother:** [crying] Please Lord do not come in to our house as we are poor.

*Mother and Luke go outside and with Dad bow down at Jesus' feet.*

**Jesus:** May God watch over this family this family

- they follow and act out God's word
- they are consistent in family devotion and prayer
- in the 12 years of Luke's upbringing, love is always at the centre of their lives, the parents always pray for God's blessings
- Heaven rejoices when the seven tasks are done every morning.

Please stand up.

[the three remain kneeling]

**Peter:** To you Luke's parents, The Lord Jesus commanded us to bring those baskets (of leftover bread) to you and to affirm that everything you do in this house to serve God is of great interest to the Lord.

**Jesus:** Today, good news has been brought to you from Heaven. It is the day of rejoicing over prosperity and victory. Luke, obedience is a great asset. God has chosen this family because you worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. You will be blessed and Luke will grow up to be successful in life and the family will be bearers of the Good news. Thank you Luke for being obedient to your parents.

**12 Disciples:** Lord here are the 12 baskets of bread.

**Jesus:** Place them in front of Luke's family. Andrew,  
How many bread loaves and fish were in Luke's lunch wrap.

**Andrew:** 7 sir.

**Jesus:** How many days are there in a week?

**Disciples:** seven.

**Jesus:** 5 barley loaves and 2 fish is equal to? [Raise  $5+2=7$ ] seven

**Disciples:** [ raise  $5+2=7$ ] seven, sir

**Jesus** after writing the number 5 and you put 2 beside it what is the resultant figure

**Disciples:** 52 [the second vanguard sheet is raised for the people to see]

**Jesus:** How many baskets of food were brought to Luke's house?

**Disciples:** [ the third vanguard sheet is raised] 12

**Jesus:** (faces the congregation). Blessings will come to this family and to those who will come after them.

[The three vanguard sheets are raised and Jesus points at the figures]

This family worship God

- 7 days a week
- 52 weeks in a year

- 12 months in a year[12 baskets of food]

God watches over this family. When Luke's lunch of 5 barley loaves and 2 fish was packed that morning, a miracle happened. This family live out God's will through love and obedience



\_\_\_\_\_ CURTAIN IS DRAWN \_\_\_\_\_

**Comper:** We hope you have enjoyed the Drama you have just seen. From the drama we should be able to learn our different roles within the family.

May God's blessings and peace go with you all.

[ A hymn can be sung while everyone is standing]