

Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Mark 9:2-10

Background

Epiphany means several things: a gift is received; the gift must be shared. Jesus appears to be suggesting a rhythm, a balance to our lives. We go inward to be with God, to receive; we go out in the world to share what we have been given – still with God. We are called to balance the pouring out of our love with the resting in God. We are called to heal by just showing up, by laying on hands, by sharing what we have. This good news that was for the few people who heard it up close and personal is ours because they reached out and shared it. It will belong to those who have not yet heard, if we accept our call to share the story by how we live out our lives and as St. Francis said, “with words, if necessary.”

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Jesus' status as Messiah is confirmed by the divine testimony that he is God's beloved Son (9:7) and is anticipated by the shining white garments of Jesus. The three that see the transfiguration are also those who witnessed the healing of Jairus's daughter (5:37) and will witness his agony in Gethsemane (14:33). Although this group of disciples have seen the healing and the transfiguration, they do not seem to demonstrate exceptional insight or fidelity.

The transfiguration story is a form of an epiphany, a sudden manifestation of the divine and when humans see or witness an epiphany, they generally have an ah-ha moment, followed by confusion (now what) or fear (what does this mean?) Peter (once again) demonstrates that he doesn't “get it” and Jesus once again has to explain his death and resurrection.

Theme: Epiphanies

Before Class: You will need to gather art supplies for the response time – paper, markers, crayons, tissue paper, glue, glitter/glitter glue, cotton balls, pipecleaners

Beginning: Gather the children into a circle and ask them what good things they saw or experienced this week (fun at school, helped another person, helped out at home, saw a beautiful flower, created something fun)

Opening Prayer: *Gracious and Loving God, thank you for being with us today. Help us to get to know you better as we explore how we can see you, hear you and experience you in our lives. Amen.*

The Story: Mark 9:2-10 You can either read the passage from a Bible or you can read the story below as it is translated.

Our story today is about Jesus and his disciples, Peter, James, and John. Jesus took the three disciples with him as he went up a mountain to pray. They climbed the mountain together, which was a long distance to travel. When they reached to top of the mountain alone, an amazing thing happened. Jesus' face and clothes began to shine brighter than you can imagine! They were brighter than the sun, brighter than the brightest light bulb. And then, Jesus was joined by two leaders from the past, Moses and Elijah. These men were great leaders who had followed God faithfully and who had died long ago. Moses and Elijah began talking with Jesus.

The disciples, Peter, James, and John, were amazed by this and could not believe what they were seeing. They never wanted to forget it. So Peter said to Jesus, "Let's make three tents to mark this occasion so we can stay here and remember this forever."

As Peter was speaking a cloud came down upon them and covered them. From the cloud God said to them, "This is my Son, Jesus, whom I love very much. Listen to him." And when the cloud was gone, Jesus was alone with them. He told the three disciples that they could not stay there, but must return from where they came to continue to spread the word of God."

Questions:

- I wonder what it was like for the disciples to see all of this?
- I wonder what it was like for Jesus?
- I wonder what made Jesus and his clothes shine?
- I wonder what you would do if you had been there?
- I wonder how we see God today?
- I wonder how we can listen to God and his son, Jesus?

Activity: After the disciples saw Jesus be transfigured, they respond in awe. God comes to them and tells them to listen to Jesus. We are going to spend some time creating a picture. I invite you to create a collage or picture that tells us how you see, listen and experience God in your life.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share their collages or their reflections. As they share note any prayers that they might have so you can incorporate them into your final prayer if you wish.

Closing Prayer:

Glorious God, we have seen your transfiguration and wondered how we are to see you in our lives today. Be with us as we go into the world, guiding us in your light and opening our eyes to your presence. (We especially pray for ____).

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace. Amen (Compline, the Book of Common Prayer, page 134)