

Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: John 1:43-51

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 has begun to put together his team. In this passage, Philip hears Jesus say, “Come with me.” And he does. As it is dawning on Philip who this Jesus really is, he goes and finds his slightly skeptical friend, Nathanael, to tell him that they have found the one they had heard about. Nathanael remains dubious—how could anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip, confident that Nathanael will see what he has seen, insists, “Come with me.” Jesus sees Nathanael as he really is and calls him forth. Nathanael knows, now, that Jesus is the “Son of God.”

Theme: Come and See

Before Class: You will need copies of the Scripture for each child. If you are going to have the children read it in parts, you can use the script found below.

Beginning: Tell the children that Jesus is beginning to put together his team in the passage we will read today. Ask them to notice how he does it.

Opening Prayer: *Thank you, Jesus, that you invite us to work along with you. Amen.*

The Story: John 1:43-51 Invite four children to read the parts of Narrator, Jesus, Philip, and Nathanael.

Reflection Questions:

- Why do they think Jesus is gathering these people?
- I wonder why Philip was so eager to join?
- I wonder why Nathanael was not so sure?
- What might have been Nathanael's decision if Philip had not been there to encourage him?
- Notice that in the story, when Jesus calls someone, that person goes and tells someone else.
- Who told us about Jesus? Who might have told them? Help them to see the story is told to someone who tells it to someone else, and so on through the years until it comes to us, right here, in this classroom?
- What might happen to this story if we don't tell others about it?

Come and See: Let's imagine someone we know who might be curious about Jesus. How could we help this person risk coming to church with us to find out about Jesus? Act this out by inviting one child to play the Philip role (eager to share) and another play Nathanael (not so sure about this).

Invitation: Take some time to brainstorm with the children about ways in which they can invite others to hear the story of Jesus. How do we tell people about Jesus in words? How do we tell people about Jesus in our actions? You can invite them to create invitation cards or telling each other what they know about Jesus so they can better tell others.

Getting Closure: Have children take one moment and think about why they are happy to know Jesus. Invite them to share with the class and encourage them to share it with the person on their mind. Prepare to share a story of a time when you told someone about Jesus.

Closing Prayer: *Thank you, God, for all the people who have kept your story in people's hearts. Thank you that we, too, got to hear the story. Help us to share the story with others. Amen.*

Edited by: the Rev. Shannon Kelly

John 1:43-51

Narrator: The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him,

Jesus: 'Follow me.'

Narrator: Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him,

Philip: 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.'

Narrator: Nathanael said to him,

Nathanael: 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?'

Philip: 'Come and see.'

Narrator: When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him,

Jesus: 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!'

Narrator: Nathanael asked Jesus,

Nathanael: 'Where did you come to know me?'

Jesus: 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.'

Nathanael: 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!'

Jesus: 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these. Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'