

Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 24:36b-48

Background: Easter - the unearned gift of grace. The reflective season of “going in” that Lent provided (no matter what disciplines we undertook, nor even how well we attended to them) explodes on Easter. Of course, we cannot “figure it out.” How comforting, then, to have these Scriptures, showing first how the disciples struggled to grasp what had happened and then stories of Jesus before the crucifixion, which are written in the light of the Resurrection.

As Easter people we know, as Paul said, that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God. We are people who expect life out of death. And so, in Eastertide we celebrate the wonder and prepare ourselves to take the awesome message out into the world on Pentecost.

A Notation for this Week's Gospel

Words tumble from the mouths of the excited disciples as they try to convey what happened on the road to Emmaus. In mid-sentence, they hear “Peace be with you.” Jesus is in their midst. Jesus encourages them to touch him and see that it is he. As they scramble to believe what they are seeing, Jesus casually asks them if, by any chance, they have anything to eat! They have broiled fish, which is shared all around.

Theme: Seeing Jesus

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the Scripture, copies of the Book of Common Prayer, and a ball of yarn or string. Figure out a 7-mile distance in your community that the children will recognize. (For example, the distance between the church and someplace they will know.) If possible, you can have an online map pulled up to help the children see all the things that are within seven miles.

Beginning: Greet the children and catch up on what they choose to share with the class that is going on in their lives. Anyone on a baseball team? School play? Then tell them that seven miles has something to do with the story we will have today. Be sure they all know the seven-mile stretch you have figured out. What would they go by if they walked the seven miles. (A grocery store? Someone's house?) Have on hand the ball of yarn or string.

Opening Prayer: *Thank you, God, for this time we have together and for the stories about Jesus that have come down through the years to us. Amen.*

The Story: Luke 24:36b-48 Tell the children that this is what happened just before the story we will read today. Two of the disciples had walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a town seven miles from Jerusalem. They were sad and talking to each other about all that had happened. While they were talking together, another man started walking along with them who didn't appear to know any of the stuff that had happened. The disciples were filling him in on all the details when they got to their town. The man started to go on but they invited him to stay with them and have some supper. At supper, the man took the bread, blessed it, and suddenly they realized it was Jesus. And just as they recognized him – he disappeared. Well, they simply had to tell the others what had happened, so they raced off – walking the seven miles back to Jerusalem where the others were. Now, here is our story for today:

Invite two people to read the passage, each reading a paragraph.

Reflection Questions:

- Can anyone remember what Jesus said to the disciples last week? ("Peace be with you.")
- What does Jesus say today? ("Peace be with you.")
- What do you see in this passage to make you believe that Jesus was patient with his friends? (verses 39-40.)

- I wonder why Jesus asked if there was “anything here to eat?”
- The last time Jesus had eaten a meal with his disciples was the night before he was crucified. Does anyone remember what Jesus told them to do at that meal? (Eat the bread, drink the wine, in remembrance of Jesus.)
- How might that last meal have helped them recognize Jesus?
- How are we invited to remember Jesus when we receive the bread and wine during the Eucharist? (We are the Body of Christ, and Christ is the Cup of Salvation.)

Activity: In your classroom plot out a scale model of a seven-mile walk. This does not have to be a straight line, but can twist and turn, just like our roads. Set the scene in your own town. Cut a length of yarn and arbitrarily decide it is “one mile.” Then, have the children mark a “seven- mile” course around the room. Make estimates as to where landmarks would go (the stop sign, the pizza place, the bank, whatever is on the real seven-mile course.) When the children have finished constructing the course, ask for volunteers to be the two disciples who go dejectedly out of Jerusalem. Ask for another volunteer to be Jesus who shows up at the end of the seven miles. Invite the two “disciples” to retrace the course racing back to Jerusalem and have Jesus get there right after they do.

Getting Closure: Tell the children that prayer is part of the work we are given to do and that this Easter season you will be looking together at different people and situations we will be praying about.

Closing Prayer. Pass out copies of The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and ask the children to turn to page 383. At the top of the page there are groups to pray for listed. These types of prayers are called intercessory prayers. A definition can be found on page 857 of the BCP. Look at the second group on the list. Last week we prayed for the Universal Church. Today, we pray for the Nation and all in authority. Who would be included in that group? (The President, Congress, the Supreme Court, the governor, the mayor, police officers, teachers, and the principal at a school.)

What would the children think is the “mission” of these authorities? (Justice and peace, serving the common good, promoting the dignity and freedom of every person are some of the things we pray for.)

Invite the children to pray for our leaders – and pray in their own words. Add “Amen” at the end.

Luke 24:36b-48

While the disciples were telling how they had seen Jesus risen from the dead, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-- that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.”