

Lesson Plans for Younger 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: Cut simple fish shapes from construction paper for the Easter tree or Easter mobile. If you want, you can put the words “He Is Risen” on the fish. If it fits your budget (financial and time) goldfish crackers would be a fun treat for this session. You will need copies of the Easter symbol you are creating today or you can use the fish as your symbol to add to your Easter project.

Beginning: You could greet each child, “Hello, Easter person!” Then, ask if they have anything to share with you – anything fun happen this week? Create opportunities for the children to share.

Opening Prayer: *Thank you, God, for this time we have together today. Thank you, that each of us, (naming each child), can be here this morning. Amen.*

The Story: Tell the children that this story is a lot like the one we heard last week – but that this one was told to us by another person who saw something a bit different.

Two of the disciples had been walking to a town that was seven miles away. Now, seven miles is a long way to walk. (Calculate what a seven-mile walk would be that the children would understand – such as from the church all the way to the supermarket.) And not only did they walk all the way to that town, but they met Jesus there, and were so excited that they turned around and raced all the seven miles back to Jerusalem, where their friends were.

“Hey, you guys,” they were excitedly telling their friends, “Jesus has risen, and we saw him!” And just as they were waving their arms in the air to describe what had happened, in walked Jesus!

Jesus said, “Peace be with you.” And then, when Jesus saw that his friends were kind of scared, he said, “Here, touch me, and you will know that it is really me.” Then, since Jesus also had walked all those seven miles, he said: “Have you got anything here to eat?” The disciples scrambled and found some broiled fish to feed the hungry Jesus. So they all sat down and had some fish.

Activity: Create a pretend seven-mile walk. If the weather and your setting permits, take a walk outside with the children. Scope out a pretend seven-mile course. (All the way down to the end of the block, for instance. Invite the children to walk to the destination, pretending they are sad because Jesus is not here anymore. Then, when you arrive at your destination, pretend to be seeing Jesus, touching Jesus, and now sure that Jesus is right

here with us. Then return, skipping, jumping, and walking quickly. If going outside is not going to work for you, see if it would be possible to have a trek inside your building -- or at least around the room.

When you return, tell them you are hungry and you wonder if there is any fish to eat. Many children would not be thrilled with eating fish, so assure them they will like THESE fish, and pass out the goldfish crackers.

Getting Closure: Continue creating the Easter project you have chosen for the season (the tree or the mobile – see Easter 2). Choose one of the symbols below or use a fish to help illustrate the story today. Give the children time to decorate it using the materials you have for them. If time permits, let each child make a symbol for your Easter tree or mobile and one to take home to put on the refrigerator. (If you have the magnet strips, a square secured to each symbol going home will make it possible to post it on the home refrigerator.)

Closing Prayer: *Thank you, Jesus, for giving us your peace. Thank you for our time together today. Amen.*



