

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children

Proper 5 (B)

New Testament: Mark 3:20-35

BACKGROUND

We are now in the long season known as Ordinary Time, which runs through Christ the King Sunday. As we take this journey, nourished by the scriptures appointed for the season and empowered by our baptisms, we are invited to be on the lookout for all the blessings found in the ordinary – to see God at work here and now. And we are compelled to share our blessings with others.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING

Proper: appropriate, fitting, and during Ordinary Time, the scripture appointed for each particular Sunday. The scriptures for this Season after Pentecost all come from the Gospel of Mark. In today's Gospel, our story begins with the realization that the crowds around Jesus had become so big that the people could not even eat (presumably because it was too crowded).

People were very interested in what he was saying, some thinking that his take on God and his ministry made him look crazy while others were drawn to his new kind of message. We see his family try to come and make him stop, worried about what people were saying about him. But rather than taking a breather or taking a time out, Jesus instead challenges the notion and challenges the notion of family

Note: Summertime may mean a different schedule and different people in the group. If Sunday morning is not convenient, consider other options such as evenings at the church or in someone's home with a simple dinner or dessert and discussion.

THEME

Who is Your Family?

BEFORE CLASS

You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for everyone, paper, pens and pencils.

BEGINNING

Be sure everyone has met and knows each other's names. Go around the room, ask each person to give their name, an excellent movie they have seen recently or a book they are enjoying.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEASON

Explain to the group that on this Sunday we begin the season of Ordinary Time or the Season after Pentecost. It is about six months long, making up the last half of the church's lectionary year. Ordinary Time is just that. It is a time in which the mission of the church is carried out in the day-to-day life of its members. Besides All Saints' Day on November 1st, there are no high holidays (such as Easter) nor disciplined fasts (such as Lent). And interestingly, in Ordinary Time we will probably encounter some out-of-the-ordinary events in our own lives and possibly even in our life together in this particular church community. The gift of this time – if we keep on looking for it – is finding the hidden blessings amid the ordinary occurrences. We could agree to share with each other, as we go along, things the world might consider unexceptional – a wildflower we noticed on a walk, an intriguing insight from a young child, even a place to purchase really fresh tomatoes.

The Scriptures for the Sundays from now until Christ the King at the end of November are called Propers. Today is Proper 5. The Gospel for this year is predominately Mark – the most succinct of the Gospels. Mark was a "just the facts" man.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and Loving God, thank you for the families you have given us and for the families we choose. Be with us as we explore what it means to be family that we might find you in new ways. Amen.

THE STORY: MARK 3:20-35

Ask for volunteers to read the passage, one person reading the part of the narrator, one or more reading the lines for the disciples, and one reading the parts Jesus speaks. (See final pages)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think that the crowds were so big?
- What were they drawn to, what were they intrigued by?
- In the parable that Jesus uses, he is challenging those around him - his followers and those who were opposed to him. Look back at the parable. What stands out for you? What surprises you? What challenges you? What are you drawn to?
- As Jesus redefines family at the end of this passage what do you think he is trying to say in doing this?

GETTING CLOSURE

If there is time, give each person a piece of paper and a few markers. Invite them to create their family tree of both relatives and others that they would consider their family. Who would they include? Would they include whole communities as family members?

Once everyone is done with their family tree, invite people to share briefly about their tree, who they included or didn't.

CLOSING PRAYER

God of our families and communities, thank you for our time together to explore your Gospel message. Help us to always remember that you are at the center of our family and you call us into a larger family. Amen.

MARK 3:20-35

Narrator: The crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When Jesus' family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying,

Crowd: He has gone out of his mind.

Narrator: And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said,

Scribes: He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.

Narrator: And Jesus called them to him, and spoke to them in parables,

Jesus: How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.

Narrator: For they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Narrator: Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him,

Crowd: Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.

Jesus: Who are my mother and my brothers?

Narrator: And looking at those who sat around him, he said,

Jesus: Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.