

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger 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

THEME

Who is Your Family?

BEFORE CLASS

You will need either copies of the tree or blank paper (butcher paper if you want) markers, pens, pencils, etc.

BEGINNING

As we begin a new season in the church and as summer begins, you may find that your class changes, therefore you will need to make sure to begin the class so people can get to know one another. As the children enter the room, invite them to your gathering place in the room. Ask them to share about their week, what they have done in the past week or what they are looking forward to in the coming week. Once you think that everyone has arrived, invite each child to say their name and one thing that they really like about their family. Nametags would be helpful as well.

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

Jesus came home and there was a crowd gathered around him. They were asking so much from him that there was not even time for him to eat! His disciples and friends heard what was happening, and they went to rescue him from the crowd. They were worried that he was getting carried away with himself and his teaching.

Some scholars from Jerusalem came there and were spreading rumors that he was using tricks and magic to impress them, and that his power was coming from the devil. When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Would a devil catch another devil? Does it make sense to use Satan to get rid of Satan? If we are fighting among ourselves, we will fall apart."

He then said to them, "Listen carefully, whatever has been done by you in the past can be forgiven. But if you keep saying that my teachings are from the devil, then you are speaking against God's Holy Spirit. You are speaking against the one who forgives us, and that is God."

As Jesus finished warning them about not dividing themselves, his mother and brothers showed up. They were standing outside and asked someone to tell Jesus that they were outside looking for him.

Jesus said to the crowd, “Who do you think are my mother and my brothers?” He looked around him, at all those who were surrounding him and said, “All of you, the people around me, you are my mother and my brothers. Those who follow me and my word and God’s will are my brothers and sisters and mother.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think there was a crowd around Jesus?
- I wonder what it felt like to be in that crowd?
- I wonder what you remember most about the story?
- I wonder what Jesus meant when he told all the people around him that they were all his family?
- I wonder what you call family?
- Are there close family friends that you call family?

FAMILY TREE

Give each person either a copy of the tree or piece of blank paper and a few markers. (If you have the materials, it might be fun to give them a large piece of butcher paper or poster paper on which to create their family tree.) Invite them to create their family tree of both relatives and others that they would consider their family. If they cannot write yet, they can draw pictures of the people on their family tree.

Who would they include? Would they include whole communities as family members?

GETTING CLOSURE

Once everyone is done with their family tree, invite people to share briefly about their tree.

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.

