Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children
Advent 3 (B)
Old Testament: Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11

BACKGROUND
Today we continue our Advent journey. Advent is a time when we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. During Advent, we reflect on the hope, peace, and joy that come with the birth of Christ. We prepare ourselves for the coming of the light that will help bring God's kingdom to earth.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
Our scripture comes once again from the book of Isaiah. Today's passage calls for preaching the good news of deliverance; the prophet states in verse one that they have been sent by God to bring good news to the oppressed and to proclaim the year of God's favor. In Israel, this year was called the jubilee year. Every fifty years, debts were cancelled and slaves were set free. The prophet preaches this message of peace and justice so that those who feel captive can be set free. During Advent, we prepare for the coming of Jesus, who brings us deliverance through his crucifixion and resurrection.

THEME
The Good News of Deliverance

BEFORE CLASS
Read the story in Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11 prior to the start of class. Take special note of what words, phrases, or images stand out to you as you read. You will need Bibles to tell the story. Gather and prep materials for your chosen activities.

BEGINNING
Light the first, second, and third candles on your class Advent wreath. What season of the church year are we in? Why are we lighting candles on the Advent wreath?

OPENING PRAYER
Almighty God, you are always with us. Be present with us now as we learn more about your good news of deliverance. Amen.

THE STORY: ISAIAH 61:1-4; 8-11
Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11 Help students look up Isaiah 61:1-4 in a Bible. Ask for a volunteer to read verses 1-2. Then, ask for another volunteer to read verses 3-4, Next, ask another volunteer to read 6-8, Finally, invite another volunteer to read verses 9-11

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder why Isaiah would tell the people of God this lesson. What do you think?
- I wonder why God's people needed to hear a message of freedom and deliverance. What do you think?
- What do you think it means to "proclaim the year of the Lord's favor?"
- Who in our world today do you think needs to hear God's message of deliverance and freedom? Why do you think they need to hear this message?

ACTIVITIES

Option 1

Spend some time in prayer for those in our world who need to hear God's message of deliverance from oppression. Give students strips of paper and invite them to write people or places for which they would like to pray on them. Then, tape the strips of paper together to make a paper chain. You can search current events or news articles for inspiration, if needed. Hang the paper chain in your classroom or in another location in your parish where people can engage in prayer, too.

Option 2

Make noisemakers reminders of Isaiah 61:1. Give each student a plain white paper plate. Write words and draw symbols representing the verse on the plate. Fold the plate in half and fill it with beans or beads. Staple or tape the ends of the plate together. Shake the noisemaker as a reminder of how we can share the good news of Jesus.

Option 3

Split students into groups of 3 or 4 each. Invite small groups to create a skit that retells what they remember from the story. After giving groups time to create their skits, invite them to share their creations to the rest of the class.

GETTING CLOSURE

Gather around your class Advent wreath. How can we help bring the good news of deliverance to people this Advent?

CLOSING PRAYER

Mighty and merciful God, you deliver those who are in trouble. Help us share the good news of this deliverance with others. Amen.

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