Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Proper 18 (B)
New Testament: Mark 7:24-37

BACKGROUND
During this "Ordinary Time" our lives may well include exceptionally un-ordinary events, such as births and deaths. 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.

The Pharisee in each of us wants to "get it right." In the gospel passages for Propers 17-22 from the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is concerned that we "get it." So Jesus takes the ordinary things of life, from washing hands to attending to a child, and meets us where we are and helps us to "get it," finding blessings in the ordinary.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
Two healings. One may have come as a surprise even to Jesus. A woman, not of his flock and not of his tradition, begs Jesus to heal her daughter. Because of her persistence he agrees to heal her daughter. A man, deaf and unable to speak clearly, is brought to Jesus. Jesus takes him, gently, off to one side away from prying eyes and heals him. "Don't tell anyone about this," he cautions. But of course, people find out.

THEME
Prayers of Healing

BEFORE CLASS
You will need either a roll of paper or a large piece of poster paper, white paper and crayons or markers, scissors, glue sticks or glue. You may need name tags – either purchased, stick-on name tags, or name tags you fashion yourself hung on yarn around the child's neck.

OPENING PRAYER
Thank you, God, for letting us be together today. Thank you for (and name each child). Amen.

THE STORY: MARK 7:24-37
Ask the children if any of them have ever been sick. Did any of them have a "virus" that made them sick? Tell them that sometimes people say it was a "germ" that made them

THE Episcopal CHURCH

Published by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. © 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

sick. In Jesus' time, no one knew the words "germ" or "virus." When someone got sick they said they had a "demon."

Today's gospel story is about a little girl who had a "demon" that was making her very sick and her mother was very worried. The little girl and her mother came from a different country than Jesus did. At first, Jesus thought he was only supposed to take care of the people in his own country. So he thought he should not heal the little girl. But when the mother begged him to heal her little girl, Jesus realized that he was here to help ALL people, not just a few. So he told the woman to go home and her little girl would be healed. When the woman got home, the little girl was playing in her bed – the "demon" was gone.

A little later Jesus was traveling to another town and some people came to him with a man who could not hear and could not speak so people could understand him. Jesus took the man off to one side where everyone could not see what was going on. He wanted to give the man some privacy. Jesus put his fingers gently into the man's ears and then spat on his fingers and touched the man's tongue. Immediately, the man could hear and could speak so people could understand him. "Don't tell anyone about this," Jesus said. But it was a secret too hard to keep, and people told each other that Jesus had healed this man.

ACTIVITIES

To help the children engage in a conversation about healing prayer, give them pieces of paper and crayons or markers to draw the people being healed by Jesus. Suggest that as each child creates a person being healed, they can then cut out that person and paste them on the roll of paper or the poster paper. Ask for a volunteer to draw Jesus to paste in the center of your paper so all the other people they've drawn can come to Jesus.

Option: Tell the children we can help heal people by praying for them. Explain that when we take a vitamin we may not notice right away that it is helping our bodies -- yet it does help our bodies. When we pray for healing, we may not notice right away what has happened. And sometimes, what we pray for does not happen, just as sometimes even though we take vitamins, we get a cold anyway. But we keep on taking vitamins. And we keep on praying.

GETTING CLOSURE

Ask the children if there is anyone they want the group could pray for as you close this time together. And feel free to add the names of people you are praying for. Make a note so you can keep asking the children – during the course of these sessions – about these people.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for showing us how to pray for people who need healing. And now we pray for (name all the people the children suggested). Amen.

THE Episcopal CHURCH

Published by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. © 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.