Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Proper 19 (B)
New Testament: Mark 8:27-38

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
"Who do people say that I am?" Jesus asks his disciples. And they offer the various responses they have heard. "But who do YOU say that I am?" asks Jesus. Ah, the central question. Central for the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. Central for us. Who do WE say that Jesus is?

THEME
If You Want to Become My Followers

BEFORE CLASS
For a list of basic supplies, go to the list below. If you do not have those supplies, a "Plan B" art activity is also suggested. In addition, it is suggested that you begin a several week "Who is Jesus" activity using a large, very simple drawing of Jesus. You might draw Jesus with his back to the group so his face may be any color the child imagines. (you can find simple line drawings of Jesus on Google Images) Or you might draw a simple outline figure with no features. You will also need to cut out a simple cross, one per sheet of card stock, one for each child.

BEGINNING
Begin by asking the children to pretend that you have never heard of Jesus. Who would they tell you Jesus is? Accept what they offer, and take note.

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OPENING PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for loving us and showing us who you are. (Include what the children have offered as you say "thank you for … .") Amen.

THE STORY: MARK 8:27-38

You might tell the story something like this.

Jesus and his friends are walking along a road. It is probably hot, and the road is dusty. His friends are talking to each other – probably saying things like: "Are we almost there yet? I am thirsty!" Then, Jesus stops walking and turns to his friends. "Who do people say that I am?" And his friends tell him that people are not sure, but they think he just might be John the Baptist or Elijah the Prophet. "Hmm," says Jesus. "Who do YOU say that I am?" They were pretty sure about this, so they said: "The Messiah."

Who is the Messiah? Well, for thousands of years, people hoped the Messiah would come and be a good king and take care of them.

"Hmm," said Jesus. "OK, but it is not going to be the way you think. I am not going to be a fancy king. In fact, I am going to get killed for what I am telling you. But I will not stay dead. After three days, I will be alive again. So, if you want to be one of my followers, you need to keep remembering to do the things I do."

ACTIVITIES

Engage the children in conversation as you do this activity, drawing out of the children who they say Jesus is. Be sure they hear you say things such as "Jesus loves us," "Jesus helps us do hard things," and "Jesus knows when we are sad, and he knows when we are happy."

Help the children create a cross to take home. Using the supplies you have, help them to decorate their crosses. You might use glue and glitter, or make a glow-in-the-dark cross. Or you might use clear folder covers and tissue paper.

Option: If time permits, show the children the drawing of Jesus, and tell them that each Sunday we will draw things to put on the poster to show things we are learning about Jesus. Ask the children to draw things they have already told you about Jesus, then suggest that, together, you draw a large cross and decorate it the way you decorated the ones that are going home – and then fasten the cross by the drawing of Jesus and hang your poster where all can see.

GETTING CLOSURE

Suggest the children find a place in their bedroom to put the cross they have just made. (If you have used paint and it is not dry, tell them you will take care of it and bring it back next Sunday for them to take home.) Suggest they put it on a bedside table or someplace they will be able to see it to remind them that Jesus loves them.

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CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for loving us and for showing us things we can do for you. Amen.

BASIC SUPPLY LIST

1 ream copier paper
1 package construction paper, various colors, 500 sheets
Crayons
Masking tape (one roll 60')
Transparent tape (108' roll)
Glue - 4 oz. bottles Or .88 oz. glue sticks
Scissors (enough for each child to have one)
Glitter

Optional:
Fluorescent BioColor Paint
Paint
Paint brushes
Tissue paper - 50 sheets -- assorted colors

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