

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Easter Sunday**  
**Lesson Plans for Younger Children**

**Scripture: Luke 24:1-12**

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." An astounding discovery! The Easter news was spread to all who would listen. The disciples told people, who in turn, told people, and to this day, we hear the message — a message of weeping and then of joy that comes with the morning of a new day. We too like the disciples weep **AND** then delight in the joy bursting forth in us. We too are called to bring this message with our lives, and, if necessary, with words, to those who have not yet heard it.

**A Notation for This Week's Gospel**

With the Passover completed, the women now come to the tomb to humbly do their work: the broken body of Jesus for burial. They bring the appropriate ointments and spices and their aching hearts. The stone they had worried about trying to move has been rolled away. But where is the body? Jesus, no longer confined to his body, is now fully free.

**Theme: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church**

**Before:** Since your church is offering Sunday school for children on Easter, you may wish to consider combining classes with the older children. If so, invite the young children to make their pictures while the older children plan their presentation. Then, the older children can present their pantomime to the younger ones, and the younger ones talk about their pictures.

Since you may have children you do not usually see (visitors? grandchildren of current members?) you will want to make them feel welcome. A healthy snack (juice, fresh fruit, simple cookies or even cheese and crackers) will help if you expect the service to be fairly long.

During Lent an altar was suggested. If you were using one in Lent, you may wish to continue. If you want to use one in Easter, a small table that is waist-high to your shortest child is the beginning. Upon it you can place a votive candle safely contained in a glass jar (baking soda makes a good base and serves as an instant "fire extinguisher" if needed). A simple white or golden cloth to cover the table (if you choose), a simple wood cross, and a tiny jar for flowers. During Easter, the children can fashion items to place on the altar. If you do choose to light the candle, be sure to blow it out when it will be unattended.

**Beginning:** If you have any children who do not know each other, begin with a get-acquainted game. Stand in a circle. Introduce yourself and then the child next to you like this: Hi. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Next to me is \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ is wearing a (whatever color) shirt. Hi. \_\_\_\_\_ (name the child again).

Then invite that child to say his or her name again, and introduce the child standing next and tell us something that child is wearing. Go around the circle and ask for a volunteer to name all the children in the circle, doing it yourself if no one volunteers.

If you are using an altar for Easter, invite the children to help you set it up.

**Praying:** Thank you, God, for this Easter Day when we celebrate what Jesus has done for us. Alleluia! Amen.

**Activity:** Give each child a cross you have cut out (a cross that is empty) or place the crosses on the table in front of the children as you tell the story.

**The Story:** (Particularly if you have not been with the children since last Sunday, Palm Sunday, you will want to "fill in the blanks" for them.) The crosses we see on the table are empty. Jesus is not on the cross. Remember that some people thought they had to get rid of Jesus. So Jesus died on the cross. The people who loved Jesus gently put his body in a cave. Today we hear about the women who went to the cave to get Jesus' body all ready to be buried. They brought some spices to prepare Jesus' body to be buried. But do you know what happened when they got to the cave? Jesus was not there! No body. The women could not figure this out. Standing by the cave was a messenger. We usually call messengers "angels." They told the women to look for Jesus where people were. They raced back to tell the men what they had seen. Peter came to check it out. Yep. The cave was empty. Jesus was risen, Jesus was free.

**Activity:** Invite the children to create Easter pictures with any art supplies you have. Give the children paper, crayons and share glue sticks to glue the brown crosses to their drawings (if they want to put the crosses on them). Tell the children we have crosses in our churches and maybe even in our homes to remind us that Jesus is no longer on the cross. Jesus is free. Make your own drawing, also.

**Option:** If weather and your surroundings permit, and especially if you expect to have an extended time with the children, a walk outside would be good. Invite the children to look for any signs of new life. (Flowers ready to bloom, buds on trees, even blades of grass turning green.)

**Option:** If you have snacks to provide, you could offer them now.

**Getting Closure:** Tell the children that Easter is not just a day, but a season of many weeks. If you have visitors or children new to your class, tell them you hope they will continue to join the class. Tell the children that we will be making an Easter Banner in the weeks to come with the signs of Easter we notice.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus, that you did what you had to do and are now free and right here with us, even if we cannot see you. Alleluia! Amen.

*Printed by the Office for Formation and Vocation Ministries of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.*

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