

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Second Sunday in Lent
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 13:31-35

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: Come, let us adore him. (Antiphon for Lent, Book of Common Prayer, page 81.) And what if, during this season of Lent, we sought a deeper understanding of this amazing gospel of grace? Will that image of grace energize us to do the spiritual housekeeping we need to be ready for the "new thing" God is doing in Easter?

A notation for this week's Gospel

Lights! Camera! Action! The drama is about to begin. The powers that be collaborate to extinguish the ministry of Jesus. Jesus, keenly aware that time is running out, continues his work. In this poignantly feminine image, Jesus muses that he had longed to gather these children as a hen gathers her chicks. The hollowness of power confronts the powerfulness of the gentle.

Theme: The power of gentleness

Before Class: Be sure to bring the container of bags and additional pieces of paper, pencils, tape, and extra bags for newcomers. You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture found below and copies of *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Beginning: Tell the children that Jesus always used examples familiar to the people. (If your church is in an urban setting, be sure the children realize that chicks are a real challenge for the hen to gather.)

Opening Prayer: Help us, God, to hear what you have for us as we continue our Spring Training so we will be ready for the season ahead. Amen.

The Scripture: Luke 13: 31-35. Tell the children this passage comes near the end of Luke's Gospel and near the end of Jesus' ministry. Invite three people to read, a narrator, Pharisees, and Jesus.

Questions:

Ask if the children know who the Pharisees are and who Herod is. (Pharisees, leaders of the Jewish religion whose job it was to protect the faith from people who were not doing it right. Herod, the king who was not in the least interested in being replaced by another King.)

Why do they think the Pharisees came to warn Jesus of the danger he was in? (Some of them probably were thinking that Jesus just might be the Messiah and didn't want him to get hurt. Others might have just wanted him out of their faces.)

How does Jesus answer the Pharisees? (Verses 32b and 33)

What made Jesus so sure that prophets are killed in Jerusalem? (Prophets are usually killed when they bring words powerful people find to be a threat.)

Who might have been shocked at Jesus' story of the hen and her chicks? (Possibly the more powerful men who did not think women were at all important.)

Who might have seen themselves in the story? (Possibly women and little girls who were not used to hearing stories that included them.)

Activity: Invite the children to figure out the concept Jesus was sharing. Then invite them to present a very brief skit about using something in their own experience and bringing it into the world day. (If they are stuck, offer some suggestions: a dog keeping little children from running into the street, a babysitter with a scared little child, a tutor working with children having trouble learning to read, for example). Invite them to present their skit at which you will then enthusiastically applaud.

If there is time, wonder with the children:

I wonder what this story has to say to us?

I wonder what this story might have to say to people in power?

I wonder what this story might have to say to people who do not have any power?

Getting Closure: When you are done with the skit and wondering, gather the children and put the container in the middle of them. Ask each child to select his or her bag. (Make sure to have extra bags for children who may not have been there the week before.) Pass out pieces of paper and pencils. Have the tape dispenser handy. Tell the children to open their bags, read what is there, add something more they have noticed this week to improve their Spring Training, write what they want to, and then re-seal the bags. When all the bags are back in the container, ask the children to seal it, so it can ride around again this week in the trunk of your car. Then, pass out copies of *The Book of Common Prayer*. Show the children the Collects Section (beginning on page 211). Then turn to page 218 and read the Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent — in the middle of the page.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for the prayers in our Prayer Book, the prayers we hear in church, and for the prayers that we find in our hearts. Amen.

Luke 13:31-35

Narrator: At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to Jesus,

Pharisees: ‘Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.’

Narrator: Jesus said to them,

Jesus: ‘Go and tell that fox for me, “Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem.” Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.”’

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