

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Third Sunday in Easter
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: John 21:1-19

"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

Thinking their ministry days were over, the fishermen went back to what they knew: fishing. But they caught nothing all night. In the depth of their discouragement they hear a call from the shore, "Try the other side." Abundance. And who is that on the shore, standing by the charcoal fire he made in anticipation of the fish?

Theme: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

Before Class: If you are using a variety of translations, bring those Bibles with you. You can also print off the scripture passage found at the end of this lesson. A large sheet of paper and felt markers would be helpful. If you do not have newsprint, bring several sheets of plain paper.

Beginning. Remind the group that we are experimenting with varieties of ways to do Bible Study during this Easter Season. Today we will try "Get the Facts," so we will be able to tell the story to another when the occasion presents itself.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, that you gently revealed your risen presence to the disciples who told others, who told others, until it reached us. Amen.

The Scripture: John 21: 1-19. Invite three voices to read verses 1-3, then 4-8, and then 9-14.

The Process: "Get the Facts!"

Ask for a volunteer to scribe the facts the group discovers. Invite the group to notice for themselves all the facts in the passage. For instance, what is the setting? (by the Sea of Tiberius)

If they need some help, here are some fact-seeking questions:

- Which disciples are there? (Verse 2)
- Who might the "two others" be? (We simply do not know, so we could even assume they were women, if we want!)
- Whose idea was it to go fishing? (Verse 3)
- Who decides to go with him? (Verse 3b)
- How long did they fish and what did they catch? (Verse 4b)
- Who is on the shore?

- Did the disciples know who it was?
- What did Jesus ask them?
- What did Jesus suggest?
- What happened?
- Who figured out it was Jesus?
- What did Peter do?
- What did the rest of the disciples do?
- What did they find when they got ashore?
- What did Jesus tell them to do?
- How many fish had they caught?
- What did Jesus invite them to? (Verse 12)
- Why didn't any of the disciples ask this man who he was?
- What did Jesus do, in verse 13 and what does it remind us of?
- How many times (according to the Gospel of John), before this morning, had Jesus appeared to his disciples since the Resurrection?

Now, having read the passage, sought out all the facts, and with all the facts on paper, we could probably tell this story to someone.

Invite the group to spend a few minutes telling the story to one another. You can do this by having them split off into groups of 2 or 3. Alternatively, you could break the group up into larger groups (4-5) and as a group, they have to figure out how to tell the story to someone else. If you want to make it interesting, you can give each group a specific assignment. For example, tell the story, not using words. Tell the story as if someone has never heard of the Bible. Tell the story as if it were in the modern day. Tell the story using images that you create or that you find in magazines.

If time permits, you might want to move to imagining with the group.

What do you think caused Peter to notice it was The Lord?

Why do you think that in each case with the Risen Jesus, he is not immediately recognizable? (Mary did not immediately recognize him, the disciples needed him to say, "Peace be with you" before they knew.) Why do we think this is so?

Getting Closure: We have now tried two methods. Some passages might not lend themselves to the approach we used today. Invite feedback on the process we used today.

Closing Prayer: Thank you for your patience with us, Jesus, as we look to recognize you. Be with us and open our eyes to see you as you appear in the midst of our everyday lives. Amen.

John 21:1-19

21After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. ²Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." ⁶He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. ⁹When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." ¹⁷He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." ¹⁹(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

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

© 2013 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.