

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

**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:** You will need a "boat" large enough to hold the children (for example, a table turned upside down, or a large cardboard box or a few boxes taped together), a "fishing net" (should you happen to have one lying around, bring it, and if you do not, a large trash bag opened up will work, or some fabric (especially tulle), or a picture of a net to show to the children).

Goldfish crackers would also be fun. Gel pens and dark paper would be good, but crayons, construction paper, and scissors will work.

**Beginning:** Ask the children if any of them have ever gone fishing. If anyone has, ask about it. Did they go in a boat? Did they use a fishing pole? What did they use for bait? Then ask if anyone has ever gone fishing using a net. (Probably not. If you have the piece of plastic net, show it and tell them that a fish net would be a little like that, only much, much bigger.) Tell them that our story today is about going fishing with a net.

**Prayer:** If you have created an altar, gather around it, light the candle, if you have one, and then offer this prayer: Thank you, God, for stories we have about Jesus that show us how much you love us. Amen.

**The Story:** This story needs us to act it out as we go. First, we need a boat. Let's see if we can turn this table over and make it into a boat. All aboard. Now, let's all row this boat out into the lake using our pretend oars. (Show the children how to row.)

Keep on rowing. We are being the disciples, Jesus' friends. Jesus was back, but not the way he was before. Jesus' friends are not sure what they are supposed to be doing, so they decided to go fishing. That was something they knew how to do.

They stopped rowing and tossed their net into the water. (Show the children how to toss the net or trash bag out into the "water.")

And they waited. And they waited. And they waited. Do you see any fish in that net? No fish. All night. No fish.

The next morning, way off on the shore, they saw a person. They listened. The person asked: "Caught any fish?" "No," sighed Jesus' friends. (Let me hear a sad "No!" from all of you together.)

"Try the other side of the boat," the person yelled out to them. Well, they did. Let's toss the net over the OTHER side of this boat.  
What do you think happened?

Lots of fish! So many fish that they could hardly drag in the net it was so heavy, so full of fish.

Just then Peter took another look at that person on the shore. "It's Jesus!" he shouted and dived into the water to swim to shore. The others rowed like crazy to get that boat to shore.

There, Jesus was standing beside a campfire he had built so they could cook some fish for breakfast. OK, let's get out of our boat, roll up our net, and have a snack we would like. (Offer the goldfish crackers.)

**Activity:** Tell the children we need another decoration for our altar that will remind us of this story. Maybe it could be a drawing of some of the fish. Maybe it is Jesus by the campfire. Or it could be the friends rowing the boat. Tell them they can draw what they want to draw. Ask what they think should be in the drawing on the altar. Provide the craft materials you have brought so the children can create.

**Getting Closure:** Invite the children to sit by the altar and tell you about their pictures. Then we can put the altar decoration we have created on the altar.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus, for helping all your friends, including us. 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.*

*© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.*

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Third Sunday of Easter**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**

**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:** Make sure you have copies of the story, either by copying the story from below, or by having enough Bibles for each person. Be on the lookout for craft supplies that will appeal to the children. Gel pens and dark paper are great fun, if your budget allows for their purchase.

**Beginning:** Tell the children you are going to do something a bit different today. You, the teacher, will read the passage because it is a bit long, and each child will have a copy to follow.

After we talk a bit about the passage, the children can act it out and the teacher can be the audience. Ask the children if any of them have ever gone fishing? Would you tell us about it? Did you go in a boat, use bait, use a net? Then tell them this story is about a fishing trip the disciples take after Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus, for the way you taught your disciples and the ways you teach each of us. Amen.

**The Story: John 21: 1-19** Have the teacher or assistant read the story for today.

**Questions:**

Which of the disciples go fishing in this passage? (Verse 2)

How long did they fish and what did they catch? (Verse 3b)

What did the "man on the shore" suggest they do? (Verse 6)

What happened? (verse 6b)

What did Peter do? (verse 7)

What did the other disciples do? (verse 8)

What had Jesus prepared for them? (verse 9)

How large was the catch of fish? (verse 11b)

What did the disciples and Jesus do then? (They had a breakfast of bread and fish.)

**Activity:** Ask the children to act out this passage. They can decide which one of the disciples each of the children is, they can choose who will be Jesus, they could "create" a boat by lining up chairs to sit in and pretend to row. Tell them to use their copies of the passage to decide what happens when.

Be an appreciative audience.

**Option.** A word for today that has less contemporary meaning is **LORD**. We have people who have authority over us (parents, for example, teachers, and for our parents: bosses) but the concept of "Lord" is not in our experience, unless we mean God.

Invite the children to discuss what the word "Lord" means.

A definition from a dictionary is:

**1:** one having power and authority over others

**2:** *capitalized*

**a :** GOD

**b :** JESUS

**3:** a man of rank or high position

**4:** a British title

**5 :** a person chosen to preside over a festival

After you have had a short discussion for the word "Lord," invite the children to design an icon for the word "Lord." (For a template in the shape of a bookmark, see the Lesson for Easter 2C)

**Getting Closure.** Display what the children have come up with and invite them to make a copy for themselves to take home.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus, for showing yourself to us as our Lord. Help us to follow you and know you as our Lord in this Easter Season. Amen.

## John 21:1-19

21 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. <sup>2</sup>Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. <sup>3</sup>Simon 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. <sup>4</sup>Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." <sup>6</sup>He 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. <sup>7</sup>That 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. <sup>8</sup>But 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. <sup>9</sup>When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." <sup>11</sup>So 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. <sup>12</sup>Jesus 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. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

<sup>15</sup>When 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." <sup>16</sup>A 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." <sup>17</sup>He 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. <sup>18</sup>Very 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." <sup>19</sup>(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.*

*© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.*

**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. <sup>2</sup>Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. <sup>3</sup>Simon 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. <sup>4</sup>Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." <sup>6</sup>He 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. <sup>7</sup>That 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. <sup>8</sup>But 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. <sup>9</sup>When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." <sup>11</sup>So 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. <sup>12</sup>Jesus 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. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

<sup>15</sup>When 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." <sup>16</sup>A 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." <sup>17</sup>He 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. <sup>18</sup>Very 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." <sup>19</sup>(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.*