

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Second Sunday after Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: John 1:29-42

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
(*Book of Common Prayer, page 378*)

Accept the light we have received and shine it forth! It is not about shining the light in other's faces, blinding them, but holding the light in open hands.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

The transfer of power: "Behold the Lamb of God!" exclaims John the Baptist. He now knows for sure that this man that he has baptized (his cousin) is the long expected Messiah. John is no longer the lone voice crying in the wilderness. This Jesus is the light to the nations.

Theme: Following the Light

Before: Bring back the construction paper candles the children made last week to leave in the classroom along with additional supplies (various colors of construction paper plus yellow for the flame, scissors, glue or staples, and transparent tape) in case you have a child that does not have a candle or wants to make another candle.

A "follow the leader" activity is suggested and if weather permits it would be good to do this activity outside. If not, think through a path you could take within your building that would not interfere with whatever else is going on, even if it means staying in your class and creating a mini obstacle course (under the table, around the chairs, etc.)

Beginning: Ask the children to find their candle to hold while we sing the song we learned last week, adding a new verse to the song. Holding the candles up in the air, sing:

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.

All around the neighborhood (making a circle over their heads with the candle)

I'm gonna let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine.

Praying: Thank you, God for showing us the way so we can follow Jesus. Amen.

The Story: Last week we had a story about Jesus getting baptized. John the Baptist was the one who baptized Jesus. Today we hear his story and the story of the first people who followed Jesus.

This is John talking: Hi, My name is John and I have been trying to get people ready for Jesus. I have been telling them someone special is coming so stop doing things that are not good and get ready. I can help you get ready. I can help you tell God you are sorry about the things you have done that you need forgiveness for and then I can baptize you.

I knew that this someone special would be coming soon. Then, one day, WOW! HE showed up, Jesus came to me and said will you please baptize me. WOW! OK I said to Jesus, I will baptize you if you think I should. So we walked into the river and I baptized him. And while we were standing in the water we both knew that Jesus is the Son of God.

I told my friends Andrew and Peter about Jesus and they went to see for themselves. Yep. They said, this is the Jesus we have been waiting for and we are going to follow Jesus.

Activity: Follow the Leader

Describe the space you and the children have in which to do this activity: outside if that is an option, or within the classroom. The object is to take turns being Jesus, the Leader. The leader will show us the way to go, and we will follow. The Leader will be careful, asking the teacher as needed for help, to lead in a way the rest can follow and not get too far ahead of the rest and not take them where they cannot go. Take turns so that each child who wants to be the leader can do so. (Some of the Simon Says type actions can go with the leading: I am patting the top of my head as I walk, I am hopping on one foot, etc.)

Activity: If you still have time, or were unable to do the previous activity, give the children paper and crayons and ask them to draw Jesus with the children and you, the teacher, all following Jesus.

Getting Closure: Gather the children in a circle and ask them to help you tell about the things we do to follow Jesus: we pray, we come to church, we help each other, etc. (if time permits, sing the song again.)

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for showing us how to follow Jesus. 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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