

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – First Sunday After the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-9

Most of the lessons in this season are from Isaiah. Isaiah was an educated man, as was Micah. Isaiah, a member of the nobility, preached justice and love in obedience to God's call. It should be explained to the children that someone who had many things thought it was essential that he listen and obey the call of God... to represent his relationship with God through his relationship with others less fortunate. He was to represent God's Light to the world and preach about that Light coming into the world.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

"I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon from the prison those who sit in gloom." [Isaiah 42:6-7]

The first "Servant Song" from the prophet Isaiah tells us of the mission of God's servant. God has chosen Isaiah to bring justice and salvation to the community. God promises to stay with Isaiah while he does the ministry he has been chosen to do.

Theme: The Light of God's Promise

Before: It is important to read the lesson at least twice *before* you come into the class. You will find the experience of knowing what the text says will help you to be present and focused. You will need a Bible or copy of the scripture lesson for each child. Invite a children to read 3-4 verses and a second child to read the next few verses, etc. The result will be that everyone is paying attention. A dictionary can be very helpful. Today a recorder would be helpful for part of the activity.

Beginning: Ask the children if they know what a promise is. Tell them that they are connected today through the promise of the covenant God made with Isaiah. A covenant is a promise God makes with us. God will always be present to hold them and help them to *see* that they have a constant friend and that they can also make the choice to be a light to all communities, all nations. Explain that they are like the prophet in that they can spread the light of God wherever they may be.

Opening Prayer: O God who is the Light of all peoples, all nations, we invite you to be with us as we share and explore today's lesson. Amen.

The Story: Isaiah 42:1-9 Invite one child to read verses 1-4 and another to read 5-9.

Questions:

- I wonder what stood out for you about today's reading?
- Ask the children to tell/write the story in their own words.

- What is the definition of God's Call? (*Listening for and responding to God's plan for you*)
- Ask for the definition of Covenant. (*A mutual, binding agreement of promise between 2 or more parties. It is also a mutual promise between God and the people*)
- I wonder what would be an example of a Covenant in today's society.
- Who can make a Covenant?
- What happens if the Covenant is broken?
- Is it different when a person breaks a Covenant with God?

Activities

Option 1: Sing “This Little Light of Mine.” Invite the children to write additional verses. Write them down and sing them into a recorder. Save the verses to use for the 5th Sunday of Epiphany.

Option 2: Invite the children to write a Covenant for how they communicate in class. You can brainstorm ideas together and write them up. If you already have a covenant, you can go over it and see if you want to add anything. Then the Covenant can be put in a frame and hung on the wall of the classroom for everyone to see.

Option 3: Isaiah was an educated man who read many books. Invite the children to create bookmarks for their reading time. Invite them to decorate it in light of what we are talking about today – covenant, promises with God, and being a light in the world. Use card stock and using stickers, colored pencils make a bookmark.

Option 4: Blessing of the Classroom (see below for instructions.)

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, please shine your Light on me today and everyday. Help me to share my Light with everyone. Amen.

**+Blessing of the Class
Chalking of the Door**

Oldest: Peace to this dwelling and all who live and enter here.

A reading from Proverbs: “By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures (and memories).”

Gracious God, as a shining star once guided the magi to the birthplace of the infant Jesus, so enlighten those who enter and dwell here to be your light in the world; through Jesus Christ we pray. *Amen.*

The Holy Magi [*inscribing the initials*] Caspar [*C*], Melchior [*M*], and Balthasar [*B*], journeyed this way in the year 2014 [*inscribing the numerals before and after the monogram as follows*] [*20 C M B 14*] in search of the Holy Child, and having found Christ here, they departed with joy leaving their blessing on this house [*inscribing the four crosses as follows: 20+C+M+B+14*] in the Name of [+] the Father, [+] and of the Son, [+] and of the Holy Spirit. [+] *Amen.*

(20 + C + M + B + 14)

Youngest: A reading from the prophet Isaiah: “The effect of righteousness is peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness, and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and quiet places.”

Oldest: Bless, O Lord, this home and all who live here with your gracious presence, that your love may be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction. Enlighten us with the brilliance of your Epiphany star so that, as we go into the world, we might clearly see our way to you and discover you in all we do. We ask through the King of Kings, Jesus Christ we pray. *Amen.*

All: May the Lord watch over our going out and our coming in, from this time forth and forevermore. Amen.

The liturgy may conclude with a festive meal or other entertainment.

*Because the names of the Magi are legendary, CMB also stands for *Christe, Mansionem Benedica* which means *Christ bless this house*.*

Isaiah 42:1-9

1 Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; 3 a bruised reed he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. 4 He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

5 Thus says the God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it: 6 I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. 8 I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. 9 See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

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