

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

Scripture: Matthew 6:24-24

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

Each decision we make, however trivial, is a choice. Our choices produce a pattern. We simply cannot serve two different bosses.

Theme: Do Not Worry about Tomorrow

Before: Tailoring to your own situation, think of small animals (such as birds, squirrels, etc.) your children would have seen in their surroundings. You will need paper and crayons.

Beginning: Ask the children if they have seen a [whatever small animal you chose] looking for something to eat. What do they eat? Has anyone ever seen any of these animals with a back pack? Why don't they need a back pack? (They find the food they need.)

Praying: Thank you, God, that animals can find the food they need. Thank you for what you give to us. Amen.

The Story: Jesus saw that some people had worried faces. What do we look like when we are worried? Show a face. (The teacher can make a "worried" face also.) People were worried. Maybe I won't have any supper. Maybe I won't have shoes to wear. Worry, Worry, Worry! So Jesus said to those people, "Why are you so worried? Look at the birds. Did you ever see a bird digging a garden, planting seeds, and worrying about whether the seeds would grow up into food for them? Of course not! And what about the flowers, do they ever say, 'I haven't a THING to wear!' No. Flowers have beautiful petals and bright green leaves. They just have to stand there to be pretty. So, don't you think God loves you as much as God loves the birds and the flowers? Do not worry about tomorrow, but be happy with today."

Activity: Finding what They Need

Ask each child to choose an animal they want to pretend to be. It can be any animal, bird, fish, etc. When each child has chosen an animal, let them take turns telling you what the animal needs for food. Then ask the children, in turn, to pretend to be the animal they have chosen and show how they find the food they need. The other children can offer suggestions as each child decides what their animal needs.

Activity: Who takes care of what WE need?

Ask the children to think of people who take care of them. Who cooks our meals? Who goes to work to make money to buy food? Who takes care of us when our parents have to be out of our house? Who comes to play at our house so we can have fun? (Obviously the children will have different answers. The teacher tailors the questions to what the teacher knows of the children: perhaps questions about day care providers would be appropriate – grandparents who either live with the children or are close enough to be in their lives, etc.)

Activity: Drawing Those Receiving Care

Perhaps the children will want to draw a picture of the animal getting what they need. Perhaps they will want to draw a picture of someone taking care of them.

Getting closure: When the children have finished their drawings, ask them to sit in a circle and invite them to share their work.

Closing Prayer: (Invite the children to name the people who take care of them and then incorporate their names into the prayer.)

Loving God, we thank you for caring for us, and for all of the people we have to take care of us, especially _____. 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.

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