

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Second Sunday of Easter
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: John 20:1-18

“I have seen the Lord!” exclaimed Mary Magdalene. At first she does not recognize who is standing beside her. When she realizes it is the risen Jesus she wants to grasp him. He holds her off and tells her to go and share what has happened: He has walked through death and has created a path for us to follow, now and on through our own death.

In these 50 days of Easter, celebrating what Jesus has done for us, we are invited to recognize Jesus standing beside us, as he did with Mary. What is he calling us to do? Perhaps we can train our eyes to look in the direction that this Jesus, standing beside us is looking. What might he be looking at? Do we dare follow where he is leading? Can we notice and honor the various ways Jesus “appears” to people?

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

“Are we next?” In fear the disciples huddled behind closed doors. As they pray, Jesus is right there with them, empowering and commissioning them. Jesus honors Thomas’ need for authentication. At the same time, Jesus reaches out to us across the millennia: “Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believe.”

Theme: Believing in Order to See

Before: If there were no classes on Easter, it is especially important to be sure children have noticed the transition between Jesus who died on the cross and Jesus resurrected. If you did not have class last week, read the suggestion for a worship space which will be used all through the Easter Season and bring these materials to class. Think about how many children you are likely to have so there is something for each child to place on the table.

Make the activity fit your setting: if the children are regularly in church during the Eucharist and participate in the passing of the peace, you can play church with the activity and skip the explanation. If they are not regularly in church or you suspect they are a bit bewildered about the passing of the peace, use the explanation.

Bring supplies for decorating the cloth. You will need dark construction paper cut into quarters, table sugar, water, a small container for those two ingredients, and Q-tips or small brushes.

Beginning: Invite the children to tell you about Easter. What happens on Easter? (They will probably tell you about chocolate bunnies, jelly beans, etc.) We have fun food when we are happy. Do you know what we are happy about? Jesus, who died, did not stay dead. That is what we are happy about.

Let’s set up our worship space, putting the cloth on the table (or box) and then placing all the things we have on the table. Light the candle, and make sure to blow it out after the story.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for this Easter Season when we celebrate that Jesus did not stay dead and was resurrected. Amen.

The Story: Jesus' friends went to their house. Their house had a big room where they could all be together. They did not know what to do next, so they held hands and prayed together. While they were praying, Jesus came into their circle and said to them: "Peace be with you." Jesus showed his friends the places on his body where he had been hurt. Then Jesus said again: "Peace be with you." Then he said, "Okay, guys, God sent me to show you how to do things. Now I want you to go out and tell other people that God loves all of us." Jesus breathed on all of them so the Holy Spirit would be with them to help them do what Jesus asked them to do. (Blow out the candle.)

Activity: In our church, every Sunday, people remember what Jesus told his friend to do. So they say, "Peace be with you" as they shake hands or hug people around them. So, let's pretend we are in church and stand and shake hands with every other person in this room and say, "Peace be with you," as we do.

Activity: If you did not meet last week, tell the children that the white cloth on the worship space will be decorated during the Easter Season with drawings we make. Today we can draw pictures that make us think of Easter. If the children have not used sugar water to paint with, show them how to dip the Q-tips in the sugar-water and draw what they want. Tell the children we will need to let the drawings dry and pin them on the cloth next week. We can make two drawings each, if we want, one to pin on the cloth and another to take home with us next week when the pictures are dry.

Getting Closure: Let the children tell you about their drawings.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that Jesus gave us your peace. Amen.

(Pass the peace with each other before you all leave.)

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