

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

Scripture: Luke 24:13-35

“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

The master teacher walks with the two dejected disciples. He listens. He asks leading questions. He waits for the teachable moment to offer information. And it is in the breaking of the bread that they realize who it is that has come among them.

Theme: Known in the Breaking of the Bread

Before Class: You will need to make copies of the script found at the end of the lesson. Bring a map of your town or a computer that has a map of our town so you and the children can determine a place that is seven miles from your church, or two locations that are seven miles apart.

Beginning: Show the children the map you have brought and ask them to find two places that are seven miles apart, imagine walking that distance, and then running back to the starting place. Ask them how long they think it would take to walk these seven miles? Tell them that our story today involves such a walk.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, that Jesus shows up when we least expect him. Amen.

The Story: Luke 24: 13-35 Invite children to read the following parts: Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Jesus, Cleopas, Two Disciples, and Companions.

Questions:

- Where are the two men going in verse 13? (To the town of Emmaus seven miles away.)
- Why do you think the two did not recognize Jesus at first? (Mary Magdalene, Peter and John did not recognize him at first, nor did Thomas. His appearance evidently had changed with the Resurrection.)
- Why do you think Jesus waited so long to answer their worried questions? (Perhaps it is because he is a good teacher who listens to find out what people already know and what they are ready to learn.)

- What did the men explain to the man they did not recognize as Jesus? (verse 24)
- Why do you think Jesus was just going to walk on? (Verse 28. It seems that Jesus waits to be invited in.)
- When do the two realize that their companion is Jesus? (Verse 31)
- What do they do then? (They rush back the seven miles to Jerusalem to tell the 11 disciples that they have seen Jesus.)

Activity: Tell the children that you are going to pretend to be one of the people who have NOT yet seen Jesus. You want the children to pretend they are each one of the two people who walked to Emmaus and then ran back to Jerusalem. Tell them to keep their copy of the story in front of them to help tell you the story. Ask them questions that let them tell you what the two men said. (Examples: Who did you think this man was when he joined you? Why do you think you did not recognize Jesus right away? What kinds of things did you tell him? When did you begin to suspect he was someone special? (Verse 32) When were you sure it was Jesus? (Verse 31)

Option: If the weather cooperates, and your situation allows, go outside, decide where Jerusalem is in your yard and where Emmaus would be (obviously, less than seven miles apart!) and act out the story, taking turns playing the part of Jesus; the rest can be the two people.

Getting Closure: Ask the children to sit in a circle, leaving one chair empty. Tell them to imagine Jesus is sitting in the chair. Ask them to silently tell Jesus anything they want to. Allow a moment or two for this.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that Jesus is known to us in the breaking of the bread. Amen.

Luke 24:13-35

Narrator 1: Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them,

Jesus: ‘What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?’

Narrator 2: They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him,

Cleopas: ‘Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?’

Jesus: ‘What things?’

Two Disciples: ‘The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.’

Jesus: ‘Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?’

Narrator 1: Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

Narrator 2: As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying,

Two Disciples: ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’

Narrator 1: So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other,

Disciples: ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?’

Narrator 2: That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying,

Companions: ‘The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!’

Narrator 1: Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

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