

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Last Sunday after the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Mark 9:2-10

Background

Epiphany means several things: a gift is received; the gift must be shared. Jesus appears to be suggesting a rhythm, a balance to our lives. We go inward to be with God, to receive; we go out in the world to share what we have been given – still with God. We are called to balance the pouring out of our love with the resting in God. We are called to heal by just showing up, by laying on hands, by sharing what we have. This good news that was for the few people who heard it up close and personal is ours because they reached out and shared it. It will belong to those who have not yet heard, if we accept our call to share the story by how we live out our lives and as St. Francis said, “with words, if necessary.”

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

Jesus' status as Messiah is confirmed by the divine testimony that he is God's beloved Son (9:7) and is anticipated by the shining white garments of Jesus. The three that see the transfiguration are also those who witnessed the healing of Jairus's daughter (5:37) and will witness his agony in Gathsemane (14:33). Although this group of disciples have seen the healing and the transfiguration, they do not seem to demonstrate exceptional insight or fidelity.

The transfiguration story is a form of an epiphany, a sudden manifestation of the divine and when humans see or witness an epiphany, they generally have an ah-ha moment, followed by confusion (now what) or fear (what does this mean?) Peter (once again) demonstrates that he doesn't "get it" and Jesus once again has to explain his death and resurrection.

Theme: Epiphanies

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the script found on the last page. Gather art supplies for the response time – paper, markers, crayons, tissue paper, glue, glitter/glitter glue, cotton balls, pipecleaners, etc.

Beginning: Gather the children into a circle and ask them what good things they saw or experienced this week (fun at school, helped another person, helped out at home, saw a beautiful flower, created something fun, etc.)

Opening Prayer: Gracious and Loving God, thank you for being with us today. Help us to get to know you better as we explore how we can see you, hear you and experience you in our lives. Amen.

The Story: You can either read the passage from a Bible or you can use the script below that is broken into parts and invite different children to take the different parts of Narrator, Peter and God.

Reflection Questions:

- What did you like most about this story?
- The story of the transfiguration begs the question, how do we see God?
- Do we see God in other people like Jesus encountered God in Elijah and Moses?
- Do we see God in the light like Jesus encountered as everything was transfigured around him?
- Do we see God in what comes after the light like Jesus saw God in the life and community around him?
- Do we see God in experiences we have like Jesus saw God in the transfiguration and in the cloud that descended upon them?
- We then also have to look at the question: How do we respond to Jesus? God clearly tells the disciples to listen to Jesus, so how are we to do the same?

How Do We See God?: After the disciples saw Jesus be transfigured, they respond in awe. God comes to them and tells them to listen to Jesus. How do we see to God? How do we listen to God? How do we listen to Jesus? How do we respond to the Holy in our lives?

Let the children reflect on these questions one at a time, and then invite them to respond by creating “God collage” that displays the ways in which they can see, listen and experience God in their lives.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share their collages or their reflections. As they share note any prayers that they might have so you can incorporate them into your final prayer if you wish.

Closing Prayer:

Glorious God, we have seen your transfiguration and wondered how we are to see you in our lives today. Be with us as we go into the world, guiding us in your light and opening our eyes to your presence. (We especially pray for ____).

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace. Amen (from Compline, page 134 in the Book of Common Prayer.)

Mark 9:2-10

Narrator: Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus,

Peter: “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

Narrator: He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice,

God: “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!”

Narrator: Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

Narrator: As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.

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