

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 11
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Background: During this “Ordinary Time” our lives may well include exceptionally un-ordinary events, such as births and deaths. As we take this journey, nourished by the scriptures appointed for the season and empowered by our baptisms, we are invited to be on the lookout for all the blessings found in the ordinary – to see God at work here and now. And we are compelled to share our blessings with others.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

The passage from Mark that we have in this set of sessions seems to be telling us, amid all that shows up in our lives, to take time to breathe. Find space to just be. Perhaps it is a walk with a child, time puttering in a garden, or going fishing. We recharge our cell phones so they can keep serving us. Take a lesson from the cell phone: breathe and revitalize.

Theme: Rest and Healing

Before Class: You will need bibles or copies of the scripture for everyone. Find a psalm or prayer to invite people into a few moments of silence, or you can use Psalm 46:10 (see below).

Beginning: Tell the group that these next two sessions invite us to step off whatever treadmill we are on and be gentle with ourselves. The Scriptures draw us more deeply into the mystery of God's love and of Jesus’ reaching out to us to experience that love. Tell the group that in addition to looking into the Scriptures, we will be spending brief times in silent prayer.

Invite them to be still for a moment using the prayer or the psalm or prayer you selected or use this Psalm 46:10, pausing for silence after each sentence as people focus on stilling their minds.

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know.

Be still.

Be.

(Leave a few minutes of silence then say the opening prayer.)

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for this time to listen to your Word in Scripture and to be still and know that you are God. Amen.

The Scripture: Tell the group that we have a "before" story and an "after" story -- and that next week we will get what came in the middle! The first part of today’s reading (Mark 6:30-34) follows the passage we had two weeks ago in which Jesus sent the disciples out two by two. Then we then jump to verses 53-56, which happens after the feeding of the 5,000 and after Jesus comes toward the disciples as they rowed their boat.

Invite someone to read the first half: Mark 6:30-34.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what stood out for you in the passage?
- How does Jesus respond to the exhausted but excited disciples? (He listens to all that they tell him and they tell him everything.)
- What does he suggest next? (A retreat – Jesus and the disciples go away to a deserted place to rest all by themselves.)
- Notice the balance between work and rest. Can you think of other places in Scripture where we see this example? (Genesis 2:2; Exodus 20:8.)
- How, in our crazy, busy lives, can we find this balance? What is our "get away" boat?
- Share ways that they have found: a long walk with the dog, fishing with a friend, looking for interludes to fill with prayer. Invite the group to experience a few minutes of silence. No agenda, just be still. You could set the tone by using a psalm you have chosen, or the brief meditation at the beginning of the lesson. You can also use a bell or chime to begin and end the time of silence. After a few moments have elapsed simply say: "Amen."

The Scripture: When the group is ready move to the next piece of scripture, invite someone to read Mark 6:53-56.

Reflection Questions:

- The disciples are mobbed again. This time by whom? (People bringing the sick)
- How does Jesus respond? (By healing them)
- If you were in this mob of people asking for healing, what would you ask Jesus to heal?
- Invite the group into another few moments of silence. Ask the group to silently reflect on what they are asking Jesus to heal in them. Invite them to share only if they want to request prayer from the rest of the group. Be sure they understand they are free to keep these prayers to themselves and Jesus.

Getting Closure: After they have had time to reflect, invite people to share as they feel comfortable. Invite the group to pray for one another for healing throughout the week.

Closing Prayer: Ask if anyone wants to request a prayer for themselves or for another. If so, include those requests in your closing prayer.

Thank you, God, for breathing room in the midst of our busy lives. We pray also for (include those to be prayed for) and entrust their care to you. Amen.

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³²And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. ³³Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

⁵³When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

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