

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 27
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Mark 12:38-44

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

The season of Ordinary Time continues for two more Sundays. The Gospel brings us back to noticing what we are being called to do. Clearly it is not to put on a big show or call attention to ourselves. Beware of those whose actions are not compatible with their talk! And perhaps it's not about the size of the contribution, but the depth of the gratitude.

Theme: Gratitude and Giving

Before Class: You will need copies of the “money” below so each child has at least one, markers or crayons, coins (enough for each child to have two or three), and a small box with a cover and a slit in the top large enough for the “coins” to be inserted or a basket. Cut out the money if you think that will make it easier for the children to use.

Beginning: As the children gather, give each of them a few coins and tell them to hold on to them tight. Tell the children we have a story today about a woman who did not have a lot of money, but who knew she loved God and was glad for the things she did have.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God for all the wonderful things you make for us. Help us to remember the good things you put in our lives and help us to share what we have with others. Amen.

The Story: Mark 12:38-44 Jesus was sitting in the Temple – their church. As people came in, they put money in a box – money that would buy things for poor people. Some people came in wearing fancy clothes and made a big fuss about ALL the money they were putting in the box. Then a little old woman came in. Jesus knew that she did not have a lot of money – in fact, she only had a few coins left. She tiptoed up to the box, and when she thought no one was looking, she quickly dropped in the few coins she owned. Then she tip-toed away. Jesus noticed.

Activity: Tell the children that when we come to church we get to put money in the plate that they pass around. We put money in because we are grateful. Ask the children if they know what “grateful” means. (Noticing the things that God has given us and saying thanks to God.)

Give each of the children a few coins and take one or two for yourself. Tell the children we are going to think about things we are "grateful" for and drop our coins in the little box as we name the things. You could begin, dropping a coin in the box and naming something for which you are grateful. Then invite the children, one by one, to put coins in the box naming those thing for which they are grateful.

Activity: Make copies of the “money” that is below. Give a sheet to each child. Have them cut out each of the bills and then decorate the bills to represent those things for which they are grateful or those things that God has given them to share.

Getting Closure: If you are going into church later, you might encourage them to put their “money” in the offering plate (getting the okay from the clergy first and letting the ushers know). If not, might the bills be put up somewhere as an offering to the church and a reminder to everyone the things for which they are grateful and what should be given to God?

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for all the wonderful gifts you give to us. Thank you for your generosity to us. Help us to give to you and to others in your name. Amen.

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