

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Second Sunday After Christmas**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**

**Scripture: Luke 2:41-52**

The Gospels appointed for these two Sundays after Christmas offer a fitting conclusion to Advent's mystery of "both/and" time. The first Sunday is from John's Gospel a mystery-laced view of the divinity of Jesus, "The Word became flesh and lived among us." The second Sunday is a very human story of the little boy Jesus. Just as Jesus was both human and divine, we also balance two worlds: the world in which we do our day to day tasks -- a world mostly unaware of its true potential -- and our life in Christ: "from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." (John 1:16)

**A Notation for this Week's Gospel**

A day back from the annual trip to Jerusalem for Passover, Joseph and Mary check with their extended family. Suddenly they realize that their young son, Jesus, is not with any of them. They race back to Jerusalem, frantically searching for the 12 year-old. Three days and unimaginable stress later they find him sitting in the Temple learning from the teachers. He is un-phased by their universal parental response of relief mixed with fury. "Didn't you know I would be in my Father's house?" asked Jesus. Yes, Mary had much to hold in her heart.

**Theme: Boy in the Temple**

**Before Class:** You will need plain white paper, a small bottle of cooking oil, cotton balls, plastic wrap to protect the table, and paper towels. (Instant Parchment!) Leftover lengths of ribbon can be used to tie the parchments. You will also need Bibles or copies of the scripture found at the end of this lesson.

**Beginning:** As the children are getting settled and gathering, ask if they have ever wandered away from their parents. Have them tell why they wandered away (looking at something interesting, to say hi to someone, etc.) Then tell the children that today the Bible story we have is about Jesus when he was 12 years old.

**Opening Prayer:** Loving God, thank you for Jesus' parents who loved him and took care of him. Thank you for our parents and our family. Amen.

**The Scripture: Luke 2: 41-52** One child could read the part of Mary, another the part of Jesus, and a third the part of the narrator.

**Reflection Questions:**

- I wonder what you liked about this story?
- I wonder what questions it gave you?
- I wonder if you have ever been separated from your parents?
- I wonder what this was like for Jesus? For his parents?

- Explore what the children know about the celebration of Passover. (Jewish people to this day celebrate this every year to mark the escape from Egypt and slavery, the crossing of the sea, dry-footed.) What do they think Mary might have been thinking at what Jesus replied (his reply is in verse 49).
- For some other clues about what Mary might have been thinking you could look up previous passages: Luke: 2: 8-19 (what the shepherds told Mary they heard about Jesus), Luke 2: 34-35 (what Simeon said to Mary when she and Joseph had brought the infant Jesus to the temple), Luke 2:36-38 (Anna the prophetess' response).

**Activity:** We do not know, of course, what questions Jesus might have been asking the teachers in the Temple. But we can be pretty sure the teachers would have known the books of the prophets. The "books" available would have been rolls of parchment.

Invite the children to find in Isaiah or Micah a passage they think Jesus would have known, copy it on a piece of plain white paper using a ball point pen. When they have copied what they want – and illustrated it, if they choose – make the oil and cotton balls available. Show the children how to ‘paint’ the sheet of paper with the oil using cotton balls. When the paper is lightly, but sufficiently oiled, dry it with paper towels. When it is dry, it can be rolled up like a parchment. (You may want to try this by yourself ahead of time.)

Some suggested passages, to get the children started looking:

Micah 6:8, Micah 4: 2b, Isaiah 11:1, Isaiah 9: 6.

**Getting Closure:** Invite each child to share the passage from their parchment.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, for these passages we found in our Bibles. And thank you for the birth of Jesus who lights up our lives. Amen.

## **Luke 2:41-52**

**Narrator:** Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him,

**Mary:** 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.'

**Jesus:** 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?'

**Narrator:** But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

*Published by the Office for Formation and Vocation Ministries of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.*

*© 2015 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.*