

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C– Epiphany 7
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Genesis 45: 3-11, 15

Background

In the Sundays after Epiphany, we have heard from a long list of prophets, each speaking to God’s relationship with the people. Although these prophets were speaking to a particular circumstance in a specific time and place, their words are helpful reminders to us today about our own relationship with God and others.

A Notation for This Week

Today we depart from our prophet lineage to catch up with a story from the first book of the Bible at its climax. The long saga of Joseph and his brothers is about to come to an end. Joseph does share many traits with the prophets. In addition to foretelling the future, he attributes his crazy circumstances to God’s ultimate care. His faith in God changes how he views his situation. And it informs how he chooses to treat his family. Today’s focus is on forgiveness.

Theme: Joseph is reconciled with his brothers.

Before Class: Choose a Bible storybook that tells the whole Joseph story. Obtain a copy of the Broadway musical “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” if you plan to use it. Gather art supplies. Choose the music.

Gathering: Greet the children and have a conversation on the joys and challenges of living with family members. Ask, “What do you usually end up apologizing for? What do you usually end up offering forgiveness for?” We have many opportunities to share, to apologize, to forgive, and to be gracious and merciful with each other.

Opening Prayer: Lord, help us to be more understanding of the needs of our friends and family. Teach us to be quick to forgive, and to ask for forgiveness. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. Amen.

Sing: What does the Lord Require? (My Heart Sings Out)
Peace Before Us (Wonder, Love and Praise)

The Story:

Since this is the end of a long story, it helps to read it from a story bible to set the context. One good edition is the Family Story Bible by Ralph Milton. Or you can use your own words to set the scene, with help from the children, then read from the CEB.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what Joseph was thinking when he saw his brothers again after so long?
- I wonder what his brothers felt when they found out that man was their brother?
- I wonder if it was difficult for Joseph to forgive his brothers?
- I wonder if having a happy ending made it easier to forgive?

Activity:

Show this scene from “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.” Talk about the emotions in this story and when they have felt similar emotions. Invite them to draw or paint pictures of this reconciliation scene or the emotions they named.

Divide into groups and create skits that show forgiveness and reconciliation. Encourage the children to use examples from their daily life.

Challenge for the Week: Challenge the children to be on the lookout for opportunities to forgive others. Remind them that it is also important to ask for forgiveness.

Closing Prayer: Dear God, you love us and forgive us. Help us to admit our own faults, and to seek your forgiveness and the forgiveness of our friends. Help us also to forgive others, so that we all may live in peace and serve you. Amen.

Sing:

Shalom, My Friends (Hymnal 1982)

There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy (Hymnal 1982)

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