

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 11
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 10:38-42

Even on a sultry summer day, the wind of the Spirit hovers — almost imperceptibly. Our lives rarely accommodate a slower pace for the summer. Yet, we are invited to notice, again, the priorities that drive us. We are invited to stop, however briefly, the manic activity and consider options Jesus offers us.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Of course, the dishes must be washed and the bills paid, but will we take a deep breath and just 'BE'? The static of distractions drowns out the music of the cosmos. Don't just DO something; sit here, Jesus invites.

Theme: Choosing the better part

Before: A few props will help the children stage this story: A plastic dishes, drinking glasses, some spoons and forks, and a dishtowel, a feather duster (or dust cloth), an apron, and perhaps a broom. You will need to make enough copies of the Mary/Martha page below so that each child will have one (and maybe a few extra in case a child wants to start over.)

Beginning: Ask the children what jobs they have at home to help out around the house. Does any one set the table, load the dishwasher, or help with the dusting, feed the dog? Tell them we have a story about a person who was spending so much time on jobs there wasn't time to hear Jesus' stories.

Praying: Thank you, God, for times to hear stories about Jesus. Help us remember to stop and be with you no matter how much we have to do. Amen.

The Story: Martha and Mary were sisters. They were very good friends of Jesus. One day, Martha invited Jesus to come to their house. When Jesus got there, they both said, "Come in! We are so glad you have come to our house." Mary sat right down beside Jesus and asked him about his trip and listened to everything he was saying. Martha went right to the kitchen to fix a really nice dinner for Jesus. And she raced around setting the table. Then she started to dust things in the living room. She was angry that she had to do all the work. So Martha said to Jesus: "Tell Mary to come help me with all this work." Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, calm down. You are getting too carried away with all this housework. Mary is doing the more important thing: Mary is listening to me."

Activity: Show the props you have brought and ask the children to choose who will be Martha, fussing around cleaning up the house; who will be Mary, sitting and listening to Jesus; and who will be Jesus talking with Mary. Let them take turns playing the different parts until each child gets to enact the character they want to portray.

After everyone has had a chance to try being “Mary” and “Martha,” invite them to share what the experience was like. What did they like about being Mary? What didn’t they like? What did they like about being Martha? What didn’t they like? I wonder if it is important to have people doing both? I wonder how we can do both?

Option: Invite the children to brainstorm with you. What are ways we can be more like Mary? What are ways we can be more like Martha? (make sure and take note of each of their responses) Hand out the sheets of paper you have copied for them and invite them to draw the ways they can be like Mary and the ways they can be like Martha.

Getting Closure: Bring the children into a circle to share what they have created.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for the stories you give us. Help us to be like Martha and help those around us and like Mary who stopped to listen to your teaching. Amen.

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

© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

I can be like Mary!

I can be like Martha!