

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 29
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 23:33-43

In the final 6 weeks of this Lectionary Year C, a firm and hopeful tone soars in Jesus' teachings in a rich symphony of themes. The background music of the Hebrew Scriptures holds the notes of the new covenant — a law written in our hearts rather than codified in legal structures — The Spirit poured out, a vision for the appointed time, God with us, a new heaven and a new earth, and a branch from the tree of David — the remnant gathered. We can believe that Jesus heard this cosmic music as he distilled his huge message to the disciples.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

This Sunday we celebrate Christ the King. We also close the third year of the three-year lectionary cycle. Today we hear a portion of the passion story in which Jesus is hanging on the cross in between two criminals. One is encouraging him to save himself. The other names that Jesus has done nothing wrong and asks that Jesus remember him. Jesus tells him, "Today you will be with me in paradise." Jesus' life on earth challenged those in power because it created a new way of life as Jesus talks about liberation from what we normally know as power. Jesus came to "to spread a revolution of love and grace, which entailed identifying and embodying a new kind of power and priority."¹

Theme: Christ the King of Love and Grace

Before Class: You will need supplies to create crowns such as construction paper, art materials, and tape. If you are going to have a celebration for Christ the King, bring celebratory snacks and party supplies.

If the children in your class attend a portion or all of your church's worship service, you might check to see if they could process in carrying the cross they have been decorating all Fall. If that is not an option, perhaps it could be displayed after class where the rest of the congregation can see it, and the children can show it to people, describing the various illustrations they have made.

Beginning: Tell the children that today we are celebrating Christ Jesus our King. Ask them what they think of when they think of a King. What do they think of when they think of Jesus?

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for all you that teach us and all that you have given us. Be with us today as we celebrate the love and grace you have given us. Amen.

The Story: At the end of Jesus' life, he was talking with two criminals. Both of them knew that they had done something wrong. One asked Jesus, "If you are the king, why don't you save yourself?" The other said, "Jesus, I know you are the king. Will you remember me when you go into your kingdom?" Jesus told them that they were forgiven the things they had done wrong and

¹ William Loader, "First Thoughts on Year C Gospel Passages from the Lectionary; Christ the King," <http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/LkChristKg.htm> (accessed May 2013)

that they would come with him into paradise today.

Activity: Christ the King

Remind the children the words they used when they were describing a king and Jesus. Invite them to create crowns to celebrate Christ being our King.

If there are going to have a celebration, invite them to help set up the room and get ready for the celebration.

Activity: If the children can bring their cross into the worship service, plan with them what you are going to do. Or, if they are going to display it where all can see, take the cross to that place before your session ends.

Getting Closure: Invite them to share their crowns. If you have time, you can also invite them to share their favorite story about Jesus.

Closing Prayer: Loving God, we thank you for all you have given to us, especially for the stories that tell us more about you, for your servants from whom we learn, and especially for your Son, Jesus. Amen.

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