

February GIFT Lesson Plan: Grades 1 and 2

Theme: We Believe in Baptism and the Forgiveness of Sins

Materials:

Beginners Bible (p. 310-315)

Doll, water, oil (pretend), candle, towel

Construction paper

Crayons, markers

Glue sticks

Handouts: Nicene Creed (one copy), *Joining God's Family*, *Baptism* word search, *Church Tour Items* check list, *Tour of Church* (one copy), map of St. Mary's (one copy)

(5-10 minutes) Arrival, Opening Prayer:

Gather together in a circle to pray.

Thank you, God, for bringing all here today. Continue to be with us as we learn about you and how you called us to become a part of your family. Then pray the Nicene Creed. At the end, reread the portion of the creed that the session will focus on: "We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins."

(10-15 minutes) Bible Reading and Discussion

Read pages 310-315 from the Beginner's Bible, *In the Jordan River*. This section is based on the part from Luke that talks about Saint John and Jesus' baptism. Spend some time talking about the children's own Baptism. Do they have a picture? What are the names of their godparents? What was some memory their parents shared with them about the day? Where were they? What did they wear? Was it a special outfit? Who was there with them? What did they do when the water was poured on their heads? Allow each child to share some memory of their special day.

(15-20 minutes) Activity: Thank you cards to godparent(s)

After discussing the children's Baptisms explain that they are to make a thank you card for their godparents. It is to thank them for being there on their special day. They can glue their picture on the card and decorate it. You may want to write the words "Thank You" on the board to help them with spelling a title. If they do not have a picture they may draw one of their own Baptism. Also, they may choose to make their card for their parents if they do not know their godparents' names. Encourage them to take their time and make the card very special. Also encourage them to have their parent(s) help them mail it later.

(10-15 minutes) Activity: Baptism Role-Playing

Tell the children that they are going to role-play the Sacrament of Baptism. Choose about 5 volunteers to act as priest, parents, and godparents. The other students can act as guests to the Baptism. Explain that the priest will pour water on the "baby's" head while the "parents" and "godparents" look on. Let the godparents hold the doll. A "parent" or "godparent" may hold the candle while the other uses the towel to wipe any extra water. Then the "priest" can make the sign of the cross on the doll's head with oil. You can talk through the role-playing and instruct the children on what to do. Discuss at the end

what each symbol represents. Water represents life. The candle shows the way. And the oil anoints us with strength. After one time, see if any others want to volunteer for a second role-play. Remind the children that although we were acting, a real Baptism is a way to welcome a new baby/person into our church family. You may also want to talk about how some churches do total immersion.

(15-20 minutes)Field trip to the church:

If there is an adult session in the church take the kids through the west overflow room. Inside the church point out the font of holy water at the entrance. Have each child practice blessing them self. We do this each time we enter church as a reminder of our baptism and of how we are a part of God's family. If time permits show the children other points of interest: the alter, the cross, the pictures along the walls, the statue of Mary, and any other spot you want to include. Inside the chapel you can show them the tabernacle and the Stations of the Cross pictures. Have each child bring a check list to mark the items you visit. They will need to be reminded to use their church voices while on the tour.

(15-20 minutes)Book Work:

Our 1st graders will look at session 17 while 2nd graders will look at session 16. The focus for both is about sacraments and Baptism in particular. For sessions with two catechists, you could split up between the grades. Or just take turns with each group while the other group works on their own. 2nd graders can start on the *Baptism* word search. Then they can read pages 123-124 in their texts. They may read in pairs if they would like.

While the 2nd graders are working independently, start on page with the 1st graders. Look at the introduction on p. 131 and briefly discuss this and p. 132, *Followers of Jesus*. Then move to *Our First Sacrament* on p.133-134. After discussing this then work on the word match, p. 135. Before leaving this group, give them the *Baptism* word search to do.

Meet back with the 2nd graders to read and discuss *Special Signs from God* on p. 125 & 126. Complete together the *Walk on the Beach* word match on p.127. Although this session focuses on Sacraments of Initiation, talk briefly about Reconciliation (as many of them will be making their first Reconciliation in the week to follow). Talk about what the word Reconciliation means, and how it's our way to say "I'm sorry" to God and to try to live like Jesus did. If time permits, have the group say the Act of Contrition together.

At the end, have both groups do the *Joining God's Family* worksheet. Have a volunteer read each statement then vote on the word that fits better. They should cross out the word that does not fit.

(5 minutes)Closing Prayer:

Have the group sit in a circle again. Practice the sign of the cross. Then pray together the *Glory Be*. This is one of the prayers the Diocese expects our 1st and 2nd graders to know. Hopefully many students will know this prayer already. Others should just join in on the parts they do know.