

February GIFT Lesson Plan: Grades 3 and 4

Theme: We Believe in Baptism and the Forgiveness of Sins

Materials:

Bibles (classroom set)

Paper

Construction paper

Crayons, markers, pencils

Glue sticks

Handouts: Nicene Creed (one copy), *Observing Lent, My Mission, New Life in Christ, 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."

(20-25 minutes)Waters of Life activity

Arrange the students in groups of 3 or 4 and pass out bibles. They may share bibles if they want. Have them look up the following Scripture references and write a short explanation of how each shows that water is a sign of life. They may need help locating some books. Try working on the first reference together as a group. For each citation invite a volunteer to read their group's response. Talk about how water was always a symbol for life in the Bible as it is for Baptism.

- Genesis 1:9-11 (God created water to bring life to humans, animals, plants)
- Mark 1:1-6 (John the Baptist baptized many people in the Jordan River)
- Exodus 17:1-7 (Water refreshed the thirsty Israelites in the desert)
- Exodus 14:15-31 (Water brought life to the fleeing Israelites)
- 2 Kings 5:1-14 (Water cleansed Naaman of his leprosy)
- John 4:5-42 (The Samaritan woman was promised living water)

(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 or the chapel 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)Activity: Thank you cards to godparent(s)

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 student to share some memory of their special day. After discussing their 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 also thank them for being a part of their lives (if this is the case). They should glue their picture on the card and decorate it. If they do not have a picture they may draw one of their own. 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.

(20-25 minutes)Book Work:

Our 3rd graders will look at session 16 while 4th graders will look at session 11. The focus for both is about the Sacraments of Initiation and continuing Jesus' mission. 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. 4th graders can begin reading the introduction and about the Apostles. They may read in pairs if they would like. They can also work on the *My Mission* worksheet.

While the 4th graders are working independently, start on the introduction and read about Philip. Continue to read and discuss the Sacraments and the People of God. They can work on the *New Life in Christ* crossword after you leave them.

Meet back with the 4th graders to read and discuss session 11.

Allow at least 5-10 minutes time at the end, to meet with both groups together. Discuss Lent and how it is a time when we try even harder to continue Jesus' mission. We try to pray more, give up something, or do something extra. Then work on the *Observing Lent* worksheet. They should think of something they can do each week during Lent. For example in week 1, they may choose to "fast by" giving up chocolate for one week.

(5 minutes)Closing Prayer:

Have the group sit in a circle again. Pray together the *Glory Be*. This is one of the prayers the Diocese expects our 3rd and 4th graders to know. Hopefully many students will know this prayer already. Others should just join in on the parts they do know.