

October GIFT Lesson Plan: Grades 1 and 2

Theme: We Believe in the Communion of Saints

Materials:

Crayons, pencils, markers

Construction paper strips

Index cards (individualized)

Book of Saints

Children's Edition Holy Bible

Handouts: Communion of Saints coloring page, *I Believe in the Communion of Saints*,

(5 minutes)Arrival, Icebreaker

As students arrive greet them and form a circle. Start with re-introducing yourself. Then the person next to you will introduce themselves and so on. After everyone has done this see if you can do all the names one final time.

(2 minutes)Opening Prayer:

This is a prayer from Mother Teresa (included in your packet). Begin with the sign of the cross and encourage the students to do this as well. Then read her prayer.

(5-10 minutes)Bible Reading and Discussion: Matthew 25:37-40

This is a shorter reading. After the reading ask the students: What does Jesus mean? What is He saying about how to act toward others? About what kind of life to lead? What does it mean to you to be a saint/live a saintly life? Can you name any saints?

(40 minutes) Video and discussion about Mother Teresa

Before starting the video tell the students they are going watch a video about a person who led the kind of life that pleased God...someone who did so many wonderful things for others. Has anyone ever heard of Mother Teresa? What have they heard? Tell the students she lived until about 11 years ago and spent her life helping the poor, sick, and dying. The video is about 35 minutes long. After the video discuss how much good ONE person did. What can they do in their daily lives to help others? Encourage little ideas (say a prayer, sit by a new kid in class, hold a door for an adult, etc.) as well as big ones (volunteering at a soup kitchen, donating clothes, picking up trash in your neighborhood).

(5-10 minutes)Activity: Mother Teresa's hand activity

Share a lesson with the students that Mother Teresa's own mother shared with her. Her mother told her to try to live her life by the "Five Finger Lesson of God." Each finger represents a word from God. YOU DID IT TO ME. Show them on your fingers. Does this remind them of the bible reading from the beginning of the session? Then have each student trace their hand onto a sheet of paper. Then they can write on each finger the lesson. They may color their page if they wish. Ask them where they could hang their hand at home as a reminder of how to live.

(10-15 minutes)Activity: Saint prayer card

Each child has their name on an index card followed by a saint's name that is similar to theirs. It will also have what that saint is patron of. (Because we may still have some walk-ins I will have a book of saints in the room. After all the cards have been passed out, you may look in the book to find a saint for any that do not have a card.) You can read each saint and then explain what their patronage(s) mean. After everyone has a card they are to rewrite the saint's name on the back in marker or crayon and then decorate the card with any pictures or designs that fit their saint, their saint's patronage. This will be their homemade saint card.

(5-10 minutes)Discussion and Activity: All Saints Day and Communion of Saints, Saint Paper Chain

Hold up the I Believe in the communion of saints handout and either read it or ask a volunteer to read it. Does it surprise them that saints include "living and dead people?" What types of actions in their lives would be "pleasing to God." Is there a saint who is special to them? How about someone in their life or family that lives a saintly life? See if each student can share someone canonized, blessed, or an every-day person who walks a saintly life.

Ask if anyone knows what we celebrate on November 1st. It is the Feast of All Saints, a day to remember those who have died and are in heaven. Pass out the strips of construction paper and have the students write the name of the person they thought of in your discussion. They can decorate the strips with drawings, decorations of things that remind them of their person or saint. Their person does **not** have to be a canonized saint. Once their strip is finished, you can staple the strips together to make a chain link. We'll combine our chain with the 3rd/4th grade group and the 5th/6th grade group to hang up. This will be our reminder that All Saints Day is a day to remember those who have died and gone to heaven.

(2 minutes)Closing Prayer:

Have the group sit in a circle again. Practice the sign of the cross. You can pray, "Thank you, God, for all the saints and people who live saintly lives. Help me to live a life like them." Then pray together the *Hail Mary*. Hopefully many students will know this prayer. Others should just join in on the parts they do know.