

Third Sunday after Epiphany – year B

Preparation

Read the Gospel [Mark 1:14-20](#) over. Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump at you. Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yearb/epiph3.htm>

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/lessonPlans/109452_115890_ENG_HTM.htm

http://www.sermons4kids.com/answering_the_call.htm

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/epi5les.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/b/3-b/A-3-b.html>

<http://www.efree.mb.ca/lectionarypuzzles/in-bwjj.htm#ep03>

<http://www.msscrafter.com/newtestament/fishermen.htm>

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- White candle
- Candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- Green cloth
- Newsprint and markers
- Small bowl of water

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the candle and the Bible on the cloth. Light the candle.

Pray the following prayer together:

Light of the world, shine on us, *(point to the candle)*
Water of the world, refresh us, *(point to the water)*
Word of the world, teach us, *(point to the Bible)*
Loving God, be with us in all that we do. Amen.

Blow out the candle. Ask the children how they share good news with their friends, with their families and with those that they don't know that well. Take some time to have a conversation about how good news is shared. When the conversation comes to an end, explain to the children that the story about Jesus today is about sharing some extra special good news with everyone.

Story Time

Materials needed

- A comfortable place to tell the story –around a table or on the floor with cushions
- Fish-shaped crackers in a bowl

Instructions

Teach the children to sing the following to the tune of *Baa, baa, black sheep*:

**Good news, good news,
Jesus wants to share
Listen carefully
It's everywhere.**

Jesus heard the news about John. He heard that his cousin John had been arrested by the king. He knew that it meant that it was time for him to get on with the work that God had sent him to do. Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He went there to share the good news of God.

He told the people that he found there, "God's time has come. God's kingdom has come close to this place. It is time to turn your life around. It is time to hear the good news of God."

**Good news, good news,
Jesus wants to share
Listen carefully
It's everywhere.**

Jesus was sharing this message of good news with everyone he met. Jesus knew that one of the best to share this news was to get others to work with him. Jesus kept looking for the right people to share this special message that God had given him to share with the world.

Jesus was walking past the Sea of Galilee. He saw some fisherman on the lake. They were casting their nets out, trying to catch some fish. The two he saw first were Simon and his brother Andrew. Jesus knew that these two would be good people to share his news with.

**Good news, good news,
Jesus wants to share
Listen carefully
It's everywhere.**

Jesus called out to them, "Follow me. I will make you fishers for people."

Simon and Andrew looked at each other. They looked at Jesus. They dropped their nets. They decided to follow Jesus right away. They knew that Jesus had good news to share about God and God's kingdom.

**Good news, good news,
Jesus wants to share
Listen carefully
It's everywhere.**

Jesus walked a little further on down the sea. He saw two other brothers who were working on their father's nets. It was James and John the sons of Zebedee. Jesus knew that these two would be good people to share his news with.

**Good news, good news,
Jesus wants to share
Listen carefully
It's everywhere.**

Jesus called out to them, "Come with me. I will make you fishers of people."

James and John looked at each other. They looked at Jesus. They dropped what they were doing. They decided to follow Jesus right away. They knew that Jesus had good news to share about God and God's kingdom.

**Good news, good news,
Jesus wants to share
Listen carefully
It's everywhere.**

Pass around the bowl with the fish crackers and ask the children what they thought about that story. Take some time to discuss how they would share the good news of Jesus with others. This will lead well into the responses.

Response

Project Idea 1: Good News Bookmarks

These bookmarks will be a way for the children to share the good news of Jesus with family and friends.

Materials needed

- card stock
- scissors
- stickers (fish ones if you have them)
- markers
- contact paper (optional)
- hole punch
- yarn

Instructions

Cut the card stock into 5 cm (2 in) strips along the long side. Punch a hole into one end of the strip. Give each child a card stock strip. Have them print on the card with the marker the following: "**Jesus brings us Good News**". Let them decorate the bookmarks with the stickers and markers. If you have the contact paper, cover the finished bookmarks with the contact paper to protect them. You will need to punch the hole again once it is covered. Cut the yarn into 30 cm (15 in) lengths and tie the yarn in a loop through the hole. Encourage the children to give the bookmark to a friend or family member who needs to hear the good news of Jesus.

Project Idea 2: Good News Fish

This is a great response for younger children to be able to share the good news that Jesus has for us with their families.

Materials needed

- paper plates
- scissors
- markers
- staples and stapler
- construction paper

Instructions

Looking at the plate cut out just less than one quarter pie shape out of the circle. Keep that piece. Do this for enough of the paper plates so that each child has a prepared plate. Staple the triangle pie shape piece to the opposite end of the open shape. You should find that you have a basic fish shape when you have done this. Have the children print the following into the centre of their fish “**Jesus calls to share God’s good news**”. Let them decorate the fish to make it look more like a fish using the markers. Encourage them to share the fish with their families to share the good news that Jesus has given to all of us.

Project Idea 3: Prayer Wall

This will be an ongoing activity for the season after Epiphany. Each week the children will add new prayers to the walls using a symbol from the story that will be identified for you. This activity will be a good way to reinforce the learning from the stories that they will participate in.

Materials needed

- fish image at end of lesson
- construction paper
- scissors
- glue sticks
- markers

Instructions

Copy the fish image so that each child will have a copy. Give each child a copy of the image and have them cut it out and then glue onto the construction paper. As they are doing this work, ask them to think about the good news of God that they want to share with others. Take some time to explore this with the children. Once they have decided what they want to share help them to write their thoughts on their fish or on the construction paper around it. If time let them colour in their fish around their thoughts. When finished have them add their fish to the prayer wall.

Closing

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candles. Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

**As we leave this place, God be with us,
As we leave this place, Jesus be with us,
As we leave this place, Spirit be with us.
Amen.**

Fish Image

