

Sunday between September 18 and 24 – year B

Preparation

Read the Gospel [Mark 8:27-38](#) 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/properb20.htm>

<http://www.mssscrafts.com/newtestament/greatest.htm>

<http://children.cccm.com/NTSupportCurriculumPDF/242WholsTheGreatest.pdf>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/proper20mk.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/b/25-b/A-25-b.html>

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/who-is-greatest.html>

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Candle
- Candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- Green cloth
- Newsprint and markers
- Small votive candles
- Magazine and newspaper pictures of famous people the children might know

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. Then have each child place a small votive candle by the large candle. As you light their candles say, *We are so happy that (name of child) is with us today.* Pray the following prayer together:

For a time to learn and grow, thank you God.

For friends to share and love, thank you Jesus.

For the time to pray and listen, thank you Holy Spirit. Amen.

Blow out the candle. Lay out the pictures of the famous people one at a time and ask the children if they know who the people are. If they can identify them ask the children how they know these people. (*Wait for their responses.*) Ask the children what does it mean to be famous or great. (*Wait for their responses.*) Explain to the children that in this story they will hear Jesus ask what his friends what it means to be great in God's kingdom and how this is shown to others.

Story Time

Materials needed

- Question mark poster made with previous lesson
- Welcome image at end of lesson
- Scissors, glue stick

Instructions

Copy the 'welcome' image at the end of the lesson. Cut it out and set aside and have a glue stick ready. Place the question mark poster where the children can see it through the lesson.

Jesus and his friends had been doing a lot of travelling. They were meeting lots of different people. Jesus decided that they needed to go back to Capernaum. He didn't want anyone to know that they were there. Jesus needed the time to teach his friends more about the kingdom of God. Jesus needed to tell them some important things that were going to happen.

Jesus told them, "I am going to be given into the hands of bad people. They will kill me. Three days after being killed God will do a wonderful thing. God will raise me from the dead."

His friends did not understand what Jesus was talking about. How could anyone kill him? They were afraid to ask him any questions about this.

They came to the house they were going to stay at in Capernaum. When they got into the house, Jesus asked them, "What were you arguing about as we came in?"

His friends got really silent. They were ashamed and did not want to tell Jesus what they had been arguing about. They had been arguing about who was the greatest in the group. One said it was John. Another said it was Peter. Still another said that it was Matthew. They could not make up their minds.

Jesus sat down. He called his friends over to him. He said, "I know what you were arguing about. You were asking who would be the greatest. Whoever wants to be first must be last. Whoever wants to be the greatest must be the servant of everyone."

Then Jesus called over one of the children who lived in the house they were staying at. Jesus put the child on his lap. Jesus said to his friends, "If you welcome a child like this in my name then you welcome me. If you welcome me, then you welcome God who sent me."

Jesus then gave the child a hug to welcome the child into God's love.

Question Mark Poster

Direct the children's attention to the question mark in the middle of the poster. Ask someone to remember why they put up a cross last week. With the children think about all the questions that were asked in today's story - who is the greatest? – what were you arguing about? Ask them what the answers to the questions were – to be the greatest you need to welcome others. Show them the welcome image. Have one of the children glue it into the second space. Explain that for the next several weeks they will be adding something to the poster to help them remember each week's story.

Response

Project Idea 1: Tissue Paper Cross

As a way to reinforce the idea of welcoming the children will make a sign to welcome others to their church community.

Materials needed

- poster board
- scissors
- glue sticks
- markers
- magazines
- glitters

Instructions

Explain to the children that they are going to make a sign to welcome people to their church. Ask them to look for images that show people welcoming others and then cut them out of the magazines. As they are cutting out the images ask the children to name some welcoming words that they can put up on their poster. When they have decided on their images and the welcoming words that they want to use work with the children to place the images and words on the poster with the glue and the markers. When they are satisfied with the over all look let them decorate some of the words and images with the glitter. With the children decide where they would like to put up their poster so as to welcome others into the church community.

Project Idea 2: Welcome Bags

If your parish is a place that receives visitors with children then this response will be a good way for the children to reinforce the idea of welcoming others with the whole church community.

Materials needed

- large, clear zipper bags
- sharpie markers
- religious stickers (if you have them)
- Bible colouring pages
- Packages of crayons

Instructions

Go to one of the following Bible colouring websites and download 3 or 4 colouring pages for each welcome bag:

<http://www.dltk-bible.com/coloring.htm>

<http://coloring-page.net/bible.html>

http://www.first-school.ws/THEME/cp_bible.htm

Give each child a zipper bag. Explain that they will be making welcome bags for families with young children who come to their church. Invite them to use the markers and stickers to decorate the outside of the bags. Make sure that they print “**Welcome to our Church**” somewhere on the outside of the bag. When they have finished decorating the bags invite them to choose 3 or 4 colouring pages to put in their bags. Then have them put as many crayons as you have available in the bags as well. With the children give the bags to the church leadership and make sure that they are visible and available for when people with children come into the church.

Project Idea 3: Pipe-Cleaner People

Making these little people will give the children a way to tell today's story to their families.

Materials needed

- pipe cleaners (lots of different colours)
- pencils
- white glue
- googly eyes
- tissue paper
- crepe paper
- construction paper
- scissors

Instructions

Go to one of the following websites to learn how to make pipe cleaner people:

- <http://familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts/buildmodel/feature/famf0200pipecleaner/famf0200pipecleaner4.html>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Make-Pipe-Cleaner-Stick-Figure-People>
- http://www.creativekidsathome.com/activities/activity_98.shtml

Show the children how to make a pipe cleaner person. Suggest that they make enough so that they can tell today's story to their families or friends. Encourage them to use the other craft materials to put clothes and other features on their dolls. While they are making their dolls go over today's story with them so they will remember the characters that they will need to retell the story. Have fun and let the children be as creative as they can be.

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:

**Loving God surround us with your care,
Friend Jesus be with us each day,
Holy Spirit move us to show your love,
Amen.**

Welcome Image

