

Third Sunday of Easter – year C

Preparation

Read [Psalm 30](#) and [John 21: 1-19](#) 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/yearc/easterc3.htm>

http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/lessonPlans/109452_115784_ENG_HTM.htm:

scroll down to find this week's lesson

<http://children.cccm.com/NTSupportCurriculumPDF/282JesusHelpsCatchFish.pdf>

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/love-in-any-language.html>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/east3les.htm>

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Candle
- Candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- White or yellow cloth
- Newsprint and markers

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the Bible on the cloth. Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

Praise God for new life!

Praise Jesus for new beginnings!

Praise Holy Spirit for new paths! Amen.

Blow out the candle. Say 'I love you' to each of the children with a different tone of voice (*for example, softly, sappily, angrily, and whatever other way you can think of to say it*).

Ask the children when you are done how it felt to have 'I love you' in the different ways.

Wait for their responses. Then ask the children how they know when someone loves them.

Wait for their responses. Love is something we all need and something that helps us to live as good people. Explain that in today's story Jesus asks one of his friends if he loves him.

Ask them to pay attention for the response.

Story Time

During this season a paraphrase of a verse of the psalm of the day will be used as a refrain for the story.

Materials

- fish-shaped crackers (if you can find them) or some other crackers

Instructions

- Place the crackers out of sight, but so you know where they are.
- Teach the children the following phrase for use during the story:

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

Peter, James, John, Andrew, Thomas, and Nathanael were together at home in Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Peter jumped and said to his friends, “I am going fishing!”

The others immediately thought this was a great idea. They went down to the lakeshore and took one of their boats out. They fished and fished all night. They didn’t catch anything. When the sun came up Jesus was on the beach. None of them recognized him.

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

Jesus called out to them, “Did you catch any fish?”

They looked at him and one of the answered, “No.”

Jesus said, “Throw the net off the right side of the boat. You should find some over there.”

So they threw the nets off to that side. They tried to haul the net back in to the boat and they couldn’t because it was so full of fish.

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

John turned to Peter and said, “It is Jesus!”

Peter immediately climbed out of the boat, as the boat was close to the shore, and ran to the shore. The rest of them stayed in the boat, dragging the net with the fish to the shore.

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

When they all got to the shore they saw that Jesus had a charcoal fire going with some fish cooking on it and bread beside it. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just netted.”

So Peter went and hauled the net to the shore. There were 153 fish in that net and they didn’t break the net even though they were so many! Jesus said to them, “Come and have some breakfast.”

Share the fish shaped crackers or the other crackers with the children at this point.

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

When they had finished their breakfast Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Peter do you love me more than the others?”

Peter answered, “Jesus you know that I love you!”

Jesus told him, “Feed my lambs.”

A second time Jesus asked Peter, “Peter, do you love me?”

Peter answered quickly with, “Jesus you know that I love you.”

Jesus told him, “Take care of my sheep.”

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

Jesus asked Peter a third time, “Peter, do you love me?”

Peter was feeling hurt by this time that Jesus would ask him three times if he loved him. So he said to Jesus, “Jesus you know everything about me. You know that I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Follow me. Show others how God loves them.”

I will not be silent! I will thank God forever!

This was the third time that Jesus appeared to his friends after being raised from the dead by God.

Response

Project Idea 1: Heart with Sheep Mobile

This response will be a way for the children to remember the important conversation between Peter and Jesus.

Materials needed

- sheep shape at end of lesson
- bright coloured construction paper
- scissors
- glue sticks
- white cotton balls
- yarn
- hole punch
- hangers or dowel

Instructions

Copy the sheep shape at the end of the lesson, so that you have three for each child. For younger children you will want to cut the sheep out for them. Give each child three pieces of bright coloured construction paper. Have them fold the paper in half and then cut large hearts out of the construction paper. Then have them glue the sheep shape into the middle of each heart. Show them how to tear the cotton balls apart and glue the bits of cotton to their sheep to make them look fluffy. When they are done with that tie 3 pieces of yarn that are different lengths to the hangers or to a piece of dowel. Punch a hole into each heart shape and then tie them onto the yarn on the hangers or dowel. Remind the children that Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him and that each time Peter told Jesus he did. Jesus asked Peter and now asks us to feed the sheep (God’s people) in the same way. Encourage the children to hang up their mobiles at home where they can be reminded of Peter’s love for Jesus and our call to follow that love.

Project Idea 2: Feed My Sheep Poster

This response will help the children to articulate their own thoughts about Jesus' command to 'feed my sheep'.

Materials needed

- poster board or newsprint
- construction paper
- scissors
- magazines
- glue sticks
- markers
- glitter
- sheep shape at end of lesson

Instructions

Make several copies of the sheep shape at the end of the lesson and cut them out. Print across the top of the poster **“Jesus says ‘Feed My Sheep’”**. Invite the children to think about what Jesus meant by feeding his sheep. Some possible answers could be caring for others, telling people about God's love or inviting people to come to church with them. Suggest to the children that they look through the magazines and come up with pictures that show what they have decided is meant by 'feed my sheep'. When they have chosen an image have them glue it onto the poster and then glue a sheep shape besides or just on top of that image. When they think they have enough images invite the children to cut hearts out of the construction paper and then glue them onto various places on the poster to finish it up. With the children decide where the poster can be put up so that others can see and be reminded of Jesus' message to 'feed my sheep'.

Project Idea 3: Heart Wreath

Materials needed

- construction paper
- glue sticks
- sheep shape at end of lesson
- glitter
- markers
- cotton balls
- yarn
- strong tape

Instructions

Make 9 heart shapes out of the construction paper and 9 copies of the sheep shape for each child. Give each child their heart shapes and have them lay them together to make a wreath shape – they may want to make a circle or heart. Once they have laid it out have them glue the heart shapes together to get their wreath started. Then have the children cut out their sheep shapes and glue each sheep onto one of the hearts. Then show the children how to tear apart the cotton balls and glue bits of the cotton to their sheep to give them a fluffy look. When they are done that invite them to print words from the story on their wreaths, such as love, feed, follow, lamb, sheep. If they want to even more decorate their wreaths they could use the glitter and glue to sparkle things up. When they are finished help them to tape yarn onto the back of their wreath so that have a way of hanging it up when they get it home. Encourage the children to hang up their wreaths at home and remember Jesus message to love him and be with the people of the world.

Closing

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

Alleluia! Thank you God for our time together.

Alleluia! Thank you Jesus for being with us.

Alleluia! Thank you Holy Spirit for leading us. Amen.

Sheep Image

