

Sunday, March 2, 2008

Preparation:

Read the Gospel for the day over - John 9: 1-41 it can be found online at <http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/ALent/aLent4.htm>

Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump out 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. If you can, print up the picture for the week from the website. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yeara/lenta4.htm>

<http://www.lectionary.org/SermonsChild/NT04John/John%2009.01-41.htm>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/a/4Lent-a/A-4Lent-a.html>

<http://revsbrown.tripod.com/aplaceforprayer/id22.html>

<http://msssbible.com/newtestament/jesusheals.htm>

This Sunday is also known as Mothering Sunday; for more information about that please see the following sites:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mothering_Sunday

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/sr-simnel-cake.php>

<http://www.dianasdesserts.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/recipes.recipeListing/filter/dianas/recipeID/998/Recipe.cfm>

Gathering:

Materials needed:

Small table or end of one table

Purple candle

Bible & Bookmark

Rocks of various sizes

Purple cloth (optional)

Dark coloured scarf

Light coloured scarf

Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. If you have the purple cloth, put it down and place the candle in the middle of it. Have the children put the rocks around the candle. Ask the children if they know how many days of Lent have gone by since you were last together (6, because we do not count Sunday). You might want to talk about how long Lent has been now and how much closer we are getting to Easter.

Light the candle.

Pray the following prayer together:

Holy God,

We come to learn,

We come to grow,

We come to find Jesus,

Be with us in all we do. **Amen.**

Blow out the candle. Ask for a volunteer. Tie the dark coloured scarf snugly but not too tight around the child's eyes. Ask them to describe what they can see. Now tie the light coloured scarf snugly but not too tight around the child's eyes. Ask them to describe what they see. Untie the scarf and ask the child to describe what they see. Ask everyone to remember the different ways of seeing as they hear today's story about Jesus and a blind man. If you printed up the picture of the day from the website take a look at what is happening in it.

Story Time:

Materials needed:

Comfortable place to set up a story area – around a table or on the floor with cushions

Jesus and his friends were walking down the road. One of them saw a blind man begging by the side of the road. They all stopped to look at him for a moment.

“Jesus,” one of the friends said, “was this man born blind because he did something wrong or because his parents did something wrong?”

Jesus looked thoughtful. He said, “It was neither this man nor his parents did something wrong. You have to remember that God sent me to the world to show God's love for the world. As long as I am with you I am the light of the world.”

After Jesus said this he picked up some dirt and spit on it and turned it into mud. He then took the mud and put it on the blind man's eyes. He told the man to go and wash in a special pool. The man went to the pool and after he washed he was able to see.

All of the man's neighbours and those who used to see the man by the road were amazed that he could see now. He kept telling them that yes he was their friend who used to be blind and that now he could see.

Some leaders in Jerusalem heard what had happened. They called the man to come and see them. It turned out that the day Jesus had healed him was a holy day to everyone – called the Sabbath – a day of rest. They wanted to ask the man what happened to him.

They said, “How did you get your sight?”

“Jesus put some mud on my eyes and told me to wash in the pool. I washed and was able to see.” the man said.

The leaders began to argue amongst themselves. Some said that Jesus couldn't be from God because he gave the man sight on the holy day. Others said Jesus had to be from God for only someone blessed by God could do what he did. The leaders decided to ask the man who had been blind what he thought.

The man said, "I think Jesus is a man of God. Someone who comes from God."

The leaders then decided to call in the man's parents. They wanted to ask them if the man had really been born blind. The parents knew that they were trying to trap everyone so told the leaders to go and ask him themselves as he was old enough to speak for himself.

The leaders called the man who had been born blind to them for another time. They once again wanted to know who had let him see the world. They were still arguing if Jesus was from God or if the man was lying to them about what had happened to him. They were arguing so much that they threw the man out.

Jesus found the man after this. He said, "Do you believe in the messiah?"

The man said, "Yes, I do. Can you tell me who it is?"

Jesus said, "The person who made you see again and the person who is speaking to you right now."

The man who had been blind then worshipped Jesus and gave thanks to God for sending Jesus into the world.

Teach the children the following song to move from the story into a response:

This song is sung to the tune of "Row, row, row the boat".

**Light, light, light of the world,
Came to all of us.
Jesus healed the blind man,
Who then showed God's love to us.**

Response:

Idea #1: Picture with Light

Stained glass windows show us stories of our faith when the light comes shining through them. With this response the children will be able to have a picture connected with the story that acts with light to show more of what happened to the blind man.

Materials needed: Picture of story at end of this lesson, vegetable oil, crayons, and cotton swabs

Instructions: Make enough copies of the picture for everyone to have one. Ask the children to colour the picture as they wish to with the provided crayons. As they are colouring invite them to remember the story of Jesus healing the blind man. Once they are finished colouring put a small amount of the vegetable oil on a cotton swab. Show them how to wipe the oil all over their pictures. If the cotton swab dries up add more oil to it. Once they have oiled the whole page get the children to put them up to the light – they will then see the picture like a stained glass window. With the children wonder aloud what colours the blind man would have seen as he got his sight for the first time.

Idea #2: Candle Holders

We call Jesus the Light of the Word. Candles help us to remember that light in our worship together. These candle holders will be a reminder for the children about Jesus in their lives.

Materials needed: small clean glass jars – with no labels on them, votive candles, white glue, glitter, paintbrushes, water, small bowls, small tin plates

Instructions: Put the white glue into small bowls and water it down to fairly thin – but, not too thin. Put the glitter into a slightly larger bowl. Have the children brush the watered down glue on to the outside of the glass jars. When the jars are ready – roll them in the bowl with the glitter until the jars are completely covered. Put the jars in the tin plates and put the candles in the jars. Tell the children to only light the candle with an adult. Remind the children that Jesus gave the blind man sight and called himself the ‘Light of the World’. As they light the candle they can think about Jesus lighting up the whole world.

Idea #3: Light of the World Posters

We all see billboards and other things advertizing in the world. We can use posters to show who Jesus is for the world at large and for us as people.

Materials needed: large construction paper or other heavy paper, markers, white glue, glitter, scissors, old magazines

Instructions: This is a response that can be done as a group activity or done by individuals. Beforehand look through the old magazines and cut out as many pictures that have to do with light (suns, candles, stars, the moon, shining faces, etc.) as can be found. Print on the construction paper JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD for those who have difficulty writing. Give everyone their poster or show them the one they have to work on together. Invite the children to decorate the poster using the pictures gathered from the magazines and the glitter. As the children are working talk about how the poster will help to remind them of the light the blind man got to see when he was given his sight. Enjoy the posters together and maybe find a place to put them up where everyone can enjoy them.

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:

Jesus be with us in Lent,
Jesus be near us each day,
Jesus be with our families. **Amen.**

Jesus Heals the Blind Man

