

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM

Primary Lessons: Phase 1 – Lesson 32

The Lord's Last Days on Earth: His Trial and Crucifixion (Matt. 27:1-2, 22-66)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The rejection of the Lord by the people after He had been received as king marked the end of their church as the means of the Lord's presence among men.
- B. The cross symbolizes the Lord's victory over evil.
- C. There is no temptation we can face which the Lord did not face and overcome.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduce the Story

- 1. Last week we learned that after the Last Supper, one of Jesus' twelve disciples betrayed Him. Do you remember which disciples it was? (Judas Iscariot)
- 2. Today we will learn about how the chief priests and elders got the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, to put Jesus to death even though Jesus had done nothing wrong. The chief priests and elders were not allowed to condemn anyone to death. They had to have the governor agree that this should be done, and the governor had to order the person put to death.

B. Tell/Read the Story

- 1. Read aloud Matthew 27:1-2, 22-25, 27-66.
- 2. Although the text is longer than usual, the children probably could manage to listen to it all, both because it is generally familiar to them and because it is not lacking in action and imagery to keep their attention.
- 3. If your judgment of your particular class differs, try telling the story in your own words, being sure to cover the main points that appear below in Ideas to Discuss.

C. Ideas to Discuss

- 1. In the morning, to whom did the chief priests and elders take Jesus? (Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor) Did Pilate think that Jesus should be crucified? (No)
- 2. What did Pilate do in front of the multitude when he said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." (Took water and washed his hands) Why didn't Pilate let Jesus go free? (He was

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afraid of the angry Jews who hated Jesus and feared they might hurt him.)

3. What was the name of the place where Jesus was crucified? (Golgotha)
4. What did the soldiers do with Jesus' garments after He was crucified? (Cast lots for them)
5. What did the sign say that the soldiers put over Jesus' head? (THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS)
6. Who else were crucified with Jesus? (Two robbers)
7. What amazing things happened when Jesus had yielded up His spirit? (The veil of the temple was torn in two; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the graves were opened.)
8. Who was the rich man who asked Pilate for Jesus' body? (Joseph of Arimathea) What did he do with the body? (Wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in a tomb)
9. Why did the chief priests and Pharisees ask Pilate to make sure the tomb was sealed and guarded? (So the disciples couldn't steal Jesus' body and then say to people that He had risen from the dead)

D. Further Ideas

1. The sour wine mingled with gall was a drink, which was given to lessen the pain of those who were crucified, but Jesus would not take it.
2. The stone that was rolled in front of the tomb was sealed to the tomb with wax. Can you figure out why? (If someone moved the stone to steal Jesus' body, the wax seal would be broken, and this would be proof that He hadn't risen.)
3. Today's lesson says that the graves opened and the bodies of saints came out of the graves. These things happened in the spiritual world, not on earth.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Heavenly Father, Thou art near," HYMNAL #158.
2. "When He cometh," HYMNAL #150.
3. "The Lord in His righteousness judges the people," HYMNAL #156.

B. Activities

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C. Project: THE CRUCIFIXION AT GOLGOTHA

1. Materials Needed

- a. 12X18 white drawing paper, or light gray construction paper
- b. Black or brown construction paper strips; for each child:
 - For Robbers' crosses: 2 strips 7" x ½" and 3" x ½"
 - For Jesus' cross: 1 strip 9" x ¾" and 4 ½" x ¾"
- c. Glue
- d. Text slips: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS
- e. Oil pastels or crayons in "sad" colors (gray, blue, brown, purple, black, olive green)

Note: If you would like to make a more finished-looking product: Before class, trim the 12 X 18 sheets to 11 x 17. When the children have finished the picture, mount with rubber cement on a 12 X 18 sheet of black construction paper.

2. Procedure

- a. Have children color a background on the white (or gray) paper using "sad" colors. (You could show them Richard Hook's Illustration for example and inspiration.) Some children may wish to color in dark clouds and a dark landscape (a hill and a flat place); others may not be so particular and would be happier covering the whole sheet with large, sweeping strokes. Encourage children to apply color to most of the paper. The white that shows can denote the daytime when the crucifixion took place, but the Word tells us "there was darkness over all the land," (Matthew 27:45) so the page should suggest darkness.
- b. Glue the crosses to the background: two smaller crosses for the robbers, and a larger cross for Jesus.
 - Give children the pieces for the larger cross first, and have them glue the cross close to the center of the page to draw attention to its importance.
 - Give them the pieces for the smaller crosses next, and remind them that one goes on each side of Jesus' cross. "Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left." (Matthew 27:38)
- c. Glue text slip above Jesus' cross. "And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." (Matthew 27:37)
- d. We do not suggest that children draw figures on the crosses since in the New Church we do not focus on the Lord's pain and suffering. Instead, emphasize the cross as a sign of the Lord's victory over evil. Evil has no power against the Lord's goodness. Evil may think it has killed the Lord, but it is only fooling itself. He really was God, and He rose again on Easter.

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IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Tasteful pictures of the crucifixion, such as the one by Richard Hook
- B. Pictures of Jesus before Pilate, of Pilate washing his hands, of the soldiers taunting Jesus, of the soldiers casting lots for His garments

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's BIBLE STUDY NOTES, Vol. 4, "The Lord's Last Days on Earth" (Matthew 26:27), pp. 385-398.
- B. THE SOWER, Vol. IV, Matthew 26:36-75; Matthew 27:1-30; Matthew 27:31-66.

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