

Focus: God's Generosity

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD: Bible Songs for Kids, Vol. 2
Bible story: Color copy: Story Book God's Generosity
Note cards
Book: The Boy Who Gave His Lunch Away

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about caring for others. This week we will talk about God's generosity, how much he gives to those who love him. God loves us first and in return we choose to love him.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).
Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Dear God,
You take good care of us always and everywhere. You protect us from all harm. Help us to be forever followers of your son, Jesus. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*

Song/Movement

Standin' In the Need of Prayer, track: 8, from Bible Songs for Kids-Vol. 2

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

It's me, it's me, O Lord
Standing in the need of prayer;
It's me, it's me, O Lord
Standing in the need of prayer.
Not my father, not my mother, but
it's me, O Lord
Standing in the need of prayer.

Not my sister, not my brother. but
it's me, O Lord

Standing in the need of prayer.

Repeat both verses 2 more times.
Last time repeat last line: "Standing in the need of prayer."

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

Jesus gave thanks to God.

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *We will hear in today's Gospel story about a time when Jesus needed to feed thousands of people. Before he gave them their share of the food he gave thanks to God. We give thanks to God before we eat when we say grace. "Bless us O Lord and these gifts we are about to receive from your bounty. Through Christ our Lord, Amen." or "God is Great, God is Good. Let us thank him for our food."*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of John.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

Read: None, pp. n/a, (see color printed God's Generosity book.

One day while Jesus was up on a mountain with his disciples, a large crowd of people came to see him, because they knew he had cured some people.

When Jesus saw the crowd, he said to Phillip.

"Where can we buy enough bread to feed all these people?"

Actually, Jesus already knew

What he was going to do, but he wanted to see what Philip would say.

Philip said,

"The money earned for 200 days' work wouldn't buy enough bread to give each person even a little piece."

Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother said,

"There is a young boy here who has five loaves of bread and a couple of fish. But that won't feed all these people."

There were about 5,000 people there.

But Jesus said,

"Get the people to sit down."

Then he took the loaves of bread and after he gave thanks, he passed them to the people. He also gave them fish. Everyone ate as much as they wanted.

When they were finished, Jesus said to his disciples,

"Gather up all the leftover pieces so that nothing will go to waste."

When they had gathered up all the leftover pieces they had twelve baskets full.

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *Why are so many people following Jesus?*
- *Why does Jesus want to feed the hungry crowd?*
- *What happens when Jesus blesses the five loaves of bread and two fish?*

- *What does Jesus say to do with the left overs?*
- *Have you ever been hungry?*
- *Who gave you food?*
- *Who can you feed?*

Reflection on Reading:

There are two things the children should see in the gospel today. One is that a child helps Jesus feed all of these people. This child couldn't bear to eat his lunch knowing others would not have anything to eat. In today's gospel Jesus feeds a hungry crowd. The other is that we should trust God to help us make the world a better place.

Many people are following Jesus because of what he has been saying and doing. They have seen him heal the sick and they want to hear his preaching.

Jesus sees the large crowd and he wants to give them what they need. The people are hungry and they need to be fed. Jesus asks his disciples to find food for the people. A boy in the crowd offers his five barley loaves and two fish. Jesus miraculously multiplies the loaves and fish, and the hungry people are given more than enough to eat.

Before feeding the people, Jesus takes the bread, blesses it, and shares it. These words and actions of Jesus are similar to Jesus' actions at the Last Supper. The miracle of the loaves and fishes in this gospel shows that Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

"Can Can:" Go through your pantry at home and find any canned goods that haven't been used within the last 6 months. If they're not being eaten, give them to a family who can use them!

"Grocery Grab:" Ask if you can pick out one item at the grocery store to contribute to the local food pantry.

Entertain "the troops:" Visit an assisted living facility or a nursing home so that your children can sing songs, play games, and read with the seniors there.

Out of the Closet: After summer and winter go through your closet and bagging up the things that are too small or unused. Then bring them to the drop off center or charity,

Out of season giving: Make cards or wrap presents for people outside of your family and circle of friends. It doesn't need to be holiday time to do this! Be different!

"I just called to say...:" Encourage the children to call elderly family members—even extended family members— just to say hello, tell them what's new, and ask them what they're up to these days. A simple call can make someone's day.

On your birthday. If you receives 10 new gifts, do you have 10 toys or games from their current stash that they can donate to someone in need?

- Have you ever given something to the food bank or shelter or a present to someone you know?
- How do you feel? Who do they think their old favorite shirt will go to now? How will their old favorite toy feel to be loved by another little boy or girl who will be so happy

to have a teddy bear to love? What do they think the lady at the nursing home will say when she opens the card you made with all the stickers on it?

Dear Lord, Thank you for all you have done for us. Help me to be generous to others as you have been to us. Amen.

If there is time, use the note cards and crayons to make cards for River Glen.

Activity 2:

Read the book: The Boy Who Gave His Lunch Away. Discuss: Why did the boy share his lunch? --He couldn't eat it if he knew there were others that didn't get a chance to eat. Do you think other people brought forward their food? There wasn't a burger king or Pizza Hut, back then people would bring some food with them when they traveled.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who is the source of life?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who feeds us and nourishes us?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with love for God?

Sending Forth

Say: *Be generous to those in need. Use one of the ideas we brainstormed to share your extra toys, clothes or food with others.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "*All Things Bright and Beautiful*" track 16 from Bible Songs for Kids Vol 2 while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.