

Focus: Loving others

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD-Easter Season-Cycle C
Bible: In lesson plan
Book: The Goodness Gorillas
Foam Heart

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about Jesus the Good Shepherd. This week we will talk about loving others as Jesus loves us.*

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.*

Let us pray.

God of Love, may we grow in our love for you and for one another. Help us to show our love for others by what we say and do.

In the name of Jesus we pray.

Amen.

Song/Movement

Join in the Dance, track: 1, from Easter Season Cycle C

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.

Join in the dance of the earth's
jubilation! This is the feast of the
love of God.
Shout from the heights to the ends
of creation: Jesus the Savior is risen
from the grave!

1. Wake, O people; sleep no longer,
greet the breaking day!
Christ, Redeemer, Lamb and Lion,
turns the night away!

2. All creation, like a mother, labors
to give birth.
Soon the pain will be forgotten, joy
for all the earth!

3. Now our shame becomes our
glory on this holy tree.
Now the reign of death is ended;
now we are set free!

Memory Verse

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

Love one another.

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

Say: *Jesus says this two times in today's Gospel. It is a very important teaching. God is love, Jesus is love. If everyone loved each other like God loves us, there would be peace in our world. No more fighting, no more bullying, no more enemies, we would all be friends. This is the world that God wants for us, one filled with love and peace.*

Sing Alleluia for Easter Season:

"Hallelu, Hallelu" Track 2 on CD Labeled EASTER SEASON CYCLE B,

Say: *We haven't been able to sing Alleluia during Lent, but now it is Easter and we celebrate that Jesus is Risen!*

Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah,

Praise ye the Lord!

Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah,

Praise ye the Lord!

Praise ye the Lord, Hallelujah, repeat 2 times

Praise ye the Lord!

Repeat three times

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,

When Jesus was at dinner with his disciples, he spoke to them.

[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers]

He gave his disciples a new commandment.

[Hold up index finger in gesture of instruction]

Jesus said:

[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers]

"Love one another.

[Cross hands over heart]

As I have loved you,

[Give yourself a hug.]

so you also should love one another.

[Cross hands over heart]

This is how all will know you're my disciples,

[Point hand to head]
if you have love for one another.
[Cross hands over heart]

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *What commandment does Jesus give his disciples?*
- *How does Jesus tell them to love one another?*
- *How will people know that the disciples are followers of Jesus?*
- *How did Jesus show his disciples how to love?*
- *Why did Jesus give his followers a new commandment to “love one another?”*

Reflection on Reading:

Jesus tells his disciples, and us, a NEW commandment. The disciples knew, just like we do, that we should love each other as we love ourselves. We should treat others as we wish to be treated. But Jesus was adding to this, he was saying that we need to love those who don't love us. Jesus showed us exactly what love is by the way he treated others. Jesus loved even those who were hard to love, those who didn't love him. Jesus did things like washing people's feet, things that most people don't like to do. He did these things to show love.

It is hard to love people even if they are not nice to you. Love is more than a feeling. We don't always feel like loving everyone. Some people do things that make us angry or sad. God wants us to love them no matter how we feel.

Love is shown in forgiving those who make us feel angry or sad. But that doesn't mean that we let someone hurt us over and over. We have a right to protect ourselves from people who hurt us. Jesus does tell us not to hate them. We can pray for them. We can pray that God will help them learn to love. We can walk away from fights and we can ask for help from others if we are being treated unfairly. Through all this, we can continue to choose love, God's love. We can hope that all people learn to choose to love.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

When we are kind to others we spread God's love. We are going to read a book about some kids that learn how important it is to do kind things for others.

Read the book: The Goodness Gorillas

Activity 2:

Love Go-Round Game

Have the children sit in a circle. Hand the heart to one child and chant the following while they pass the heart around the circle:

*There's plenty of love to go around,
The more and more we share.
Where is the love that goes around?
Where is the love, O where?*

When the verse is done, whoever is holding the heart shares something they can do to be kind to others. (you can play a portion of a song from one of the CD's instead-for example: Jesus loves me, this I know, Jesus loves the little children, I am so glad that Jesus loves me-instead of the verse.)

Repeat as time allows.

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 cares for all people?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who tells us to love one another as he loves?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with the glory of God?

Sending Forth

Say: Remember to love others this week in a way that others will know you follow Jesus. Help someone who is sad or hurt. Love someone that others are making fun of. Be the person Jesus shows us how to be.

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "*Rejoice in the Lord*" track 3 from Easter Season Cycle C 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.