

Focus: We are one with Jesus

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD-Easter Season-Cycle C
Bible: Children's Bible Storybook
Jigsaw puzzle
Flash cards of community helpers/Felt Board
Sheets of cards to be cut.
Scissors-for leader and aide to cut out cards.
Crayons (in closet)

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide us to love others and be a peace-filled people. This week we will hear Jesus ask God, his Father, to protect us and help us to live as one in the world. If we live in a world of peace all the people will be happy.

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.

Loving God,

We know that Jesus is with you heaven. We know that he is with us, too, in Spirit.

Thank you for giving us Jesus to teach us to be strong and do the right things. Thank you, Jesus, for asking God, the Father, to care for us as he cares for you.

In Jesus name 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.

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.*

Let them be one, as we are one.

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

Say: *Jesus knew that we'd be happy only if we loved one another. He also knew that we'd need God's help to share better, to show more patience with each other, to forgive more quickly and to love more completely each day. These things aren't always easy to do. We need to keep praying that God will help us overcome the selfishness that keeps us from loving and truly being happy. The more we show God's love to others, the more we can help them know and love God too.*

Sing Alleluia for Easter Season:

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

***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: Children's Bible Storybook, pp. 326, *Jesus Prays for His Followers*

Read the first 4 paragraphs only. Up to "...led them into the garden."

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *This Gospel passage takes place the night before Jesus dies. What did he want to do one last time with his disciples?*
- *Why do you think he chose to pray? (Remember prayer is the way we talk to God)*
- *What did Jesus do when he was with his followers?*
- *Why did Jesus go to the Father?*
- *Who does Jesus say loves us?*
- *What does Jesus ask God to do for his followers, and for us?*

Reflection on Reading:

In this Gospel passage, Jesus says that he and the Father are one. God is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God is three persons in one. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit form a community of love that is so perfect that they are completely one, even though they are three persons. (don't worry too much about the theology behind the Holy Trinity, we will cover that in more depth in a few weeks on the Feast of the Holy Trinity.)

God wants us to live in community with others, a community of peace and love. No one is perfect, so we cannot love as perfectly as God loves. The more we do love, however, the more we become a community that shares love in common.

Jesus knew that we would be happy if we love one another. When selfishness is gone and everyone lives in goodness, then God's love will completely fill everyone. We will share everything in common and be a perfect community. That's what we call the Kingdom of God.

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:Object Lesson:**We Are One**

Does anyone like to work on jigsaw puzzles? They can be a lot of fun.

(Open the box to reveal the pieces of the puzzle.)

Look at all the pieces of the puzzle. The pieces are different shapes, sizes and colors. If you look at one piece of the puzzle, you don't get very much of the picture.

(Pull out a handful of pieces)

The pieces by themselves are not very important, but when you put them all together and they become one, they show the total picture, if just one piece is missing, the whole picture won't be complete.

The community of the church is like a jigsaw puzzle. The members of the church come in different shapes and sizes and colors, just like the puzzle pieces. Jesus prayed that the church would be one so that the world would see God's love in us.

(Point to the children in each corner of the group)

You, and you and you, all of us are part of that picture. Jesus wants us to love one another, help one another and serve one another. When everyone does that, we all become one, the puzzle pieces all fit together, just as Jesus prayed we would be.

Sometimes it's hard to put all the pieces of the puzzle together. (Struggle with putting a couple of pieces together)

Sometimes it is hard for all the members of the church to get along and be one with each other. When we always look at what our own likes and dislikes are, we are no longer being one. We are

like the individual pieces of the puzzle. The world can't see God's love in us. They don't get the whole picture.

If you ever find yourself thinking about how nice it would be if everyone did everything your way, rather than working at finding a way everyone could be happy, remember that Jesus prayed we would be one. When we are one, bound together by Christ's love, the world will see God's love through us.

Dear Father, help us to be one so that the world may see your love in us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Activity 2:

We talked about God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit living in community. We live in community too. We have many connections to others. In our house (show parents and kids) we live in community with our family.

We also live in other communities, we have a church community that we belong to (show priest). Father takes care of all of the community and helps us with our faith. We also live in the community of our town. There are many people who help our community. Policemen make the community safe and help us when there is danger. Firemen protect the community by teaching us fire safety and putting out fires. Doctors and nurses take care of the community when we are sick. When we are very sick or injured paramedics come quickly and take us safely to the hospital. Teachers take care of the community by helping us to learn new things about the world we live in. Soldiers protect us and keep us safe.

Have the children choose one card addressed to a community helper. Have them draw pictures of the people helping others or draw hearts and flowers or other symbols of love and kindness. When they are done put them on the prayer table. After you say the prayer below put them in the supply box. The cards will go to the police station, the main firehouse, the paramedic station and the VFW.

Say a prayer over the cards:

Dear God, please watch over these people as they watch over and take care of us. Send them your love and grace so they may do their work well and make our community safe. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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 one with Jesus?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who shows us the love of God?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who brings us all together in the love of Jesus?

Sending Forth

Say: This week, as you travel in the community look for those whose job is to take care of others. Say 'thank you for taking care of us' when you see them. Remember to ask God to bless them.

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.