

Faith Lesson Plan and Faith Activity

Advent - Season of Peace (Source: Our Sunday Visitor - Alive in Christ)

Grades 5 & 6

Invite - Let Us Pray

Invite the young people to gather in the prayer space and make the sign of the Cross. Read aloud the leader's prayer. Proclaim the verse from Colossians 3:15 together. Have the young people move out of the prayer space and back to their seats.

Let Us Pray

Leader: Faithful God,
You sent your only Son to bring us the gift of peace.
May we be messengers of peace with our families and
friends.

“And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,
the peace into which you were also called in one
body.” **Colossians 3:15**

All: Amen.

Say: We all want peace in our homes and in the world. God wants that for us, too. Listen to the words of the angels as they announced the birth of Jesus.

Guide the young people through the process of Scripture reflection below.

Invite them to close their eyes, be still, and open their minds and hearts to what God is saying to them in this passage.

Proclaim the Scripture and **Maintain** several moments of silence.

Display and Read the following:

Scripture

“... ‘And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.’” **Luke 2:12-14**

Young people reenact a Nativity scene during a Christmas Eve Mass.

What Do You Wonder?

- How many ways can you bring peace to your family?
- Why can't people live in peace?

Ask: What did you hear God say to you in the Sacred Scripture reading? (Engage the young people to respond.)

Say: In the reading, the angels proclaim peace to people of good will. That's you and me. We are called to continue to bring Jesus' peace to others. (Pause) Let's respond to the questions in the "What Do You Wonder?" section.

Say: Let's explore the answers to the following questions as well in this next section of today's lesson: What does peace really mean? Why is peace so important to our celebration of Christmas?

Discover

Display and read aloud the opening sentence of the prayer "Glory to God" from the Mass.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men. We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory . . .

Ask & Say: What is the connection between these words of the "Glory to God" prayer from the Mass and the celebration of Christmas? (Pause) If you are unsure, listen for the answer in the following:

Say: As the Jewish people waited for the Messiah, they heard many prophecies. They learned that a virgin would give birth to a son called Immanuel. He would be known as “Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:5) **This child’s reign would be vast and forever peaceful (see Isaiah 9:6). Christmas celebrates the arrival of this Prince of Peace.**

Display and read aloud the following Scripture:

Isaiah 9:5-6

5 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us;
upon his shoulder dominion rests.

They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.

6 His dominion is vast
and forever peaceful,
Upon David’s throne, and over his kingdom,
which he confirms and sustains
By judgment and justice,
both now and forever.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

Say: When Jesus was born, the heavenly host praised God and proclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests” (Luke 2:14). After his Resurrection, Jesus greeted people with the words “Peace be with you” (John 20:19). **The peace Jesus offers is rooted in the promise that no matter what happens, you can trust that God is always with you.**

Say & Ask: So, I ask you again. What is the connection between the beginning words of the Gloria—“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men,” and the celebration of Christmas?

Say: Christmas celebrates the arrival of this Prince of Peace. (Pause) The peace Jesus offers is rooted in the promise that no matter what happens, you can trust that God is always with you.

Say: Every time you say or sing the *Gloria*, you proclaim God’s peace. But peace happens when you act as a peacemaker. Being a peacemaker is one of the ways you continue to bring God’s message to others.

Say & Ask: You might have heard this line in the song: “Let there be peace on earth / let it begin with me.” When peace begins with one of us, how does that change things for everyone around us?

Say: Let’s watch the following video about peace and Christmas while you contemplate that question. YouTube Link: https://youtu.be/86_4BesaOVc

Ask: What was your favorite part of this video? What was the most important lesson in the video? (Engage the young people to respond.)

Say & Ask: We heard this line in the song: “Let there be peace on earth / let it begin with me.” So once again, I ask the following question: When peace begins with one of us, how does that change things for everyone around us? (Engage the young people to respond.)

Say: One way to celebrate Jesus’ birth is to commit yourself to peacemaking. You become a peacemaker by settling problems with kindness and justice, by praying for harmony, and by asking God to end conflicts between neighbors and nations. You make the world more peaceful by working for justice in your home, school, and community.

Ask: So, how can you be a peacemaker? (Invite each young person to share.)

Say: The Lord’s Prayer, given by Jesus to his followers, is the family prayer of Christians. The Lord’s Prayer is the one prayer shared by Christians of all denominations and traditions. It is a powerful symbol of the peace and unity that unifies all members of the Body of Christ.

Say: Let’s all participate in a short prayer service to “Celebrate Peace.”

Provide each young person with a copy of the following prayer service on page 5.

Celebrate Peace



Let Us Pray

Gather and pray the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All: Now and forever.

Leader: Let us pray.

Bow your heads in silent prayer. Then listen as the leader prays.

God of peace, may our hearts and minds be open to your presence. May our actions and words spread your peace throughout the world.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer and Sign of Peace

Leader: At the Savior's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

All: Our Father ...

Leader: Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

Go Forth!

Leader: Go forth in peace. May the love and kindness of Jesus
be with you as you share his peace with all you meet.

All: Amen.