

# Faith Lesson Plan and Faith Activity

## Christmas - The Word Made Flesh

Source: (Our Sunday Visitor)

### Grades 7 & 8

#### 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 Psalm 96:1-2 together. Have the youth move out of the prayer space and back to their seats.

#### Let Us Pray

**Leader:** Lord God, the coming of Jesus, your Son, brings you great glory.

“Sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.  
Sing to the LORD; bless his name.” **Psalm 96:1-2**

**All:** Bless the name of the Lord. Amen.

**Say:** Let us listen to the Scripture reading and hear Saint John tell us how the Word became flesh.

**Guide** the young people through the process of the 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.

**Maintain** several moments of silence

**Display and Read the following.**

**Read:** Acts 4: 32-35



## Scripture

"In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things came to be through him,  
and without him nothing came to be.

What came to be  
through him was life,  
and this life was the light of the human race;  
the light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it. ...

And the Word became flesh

and made his dwelling among us,

and we saw his glory,

the glory as of the Father's only Son,

full of grace and truth." **John 1:1-5, 14**

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

**Say:** The Incarnation is an expression of God's Word, his promise to us.

**Ask:** What else have you ever thought about God's Word and what it means to you today? Engage the young people to respond to the questions below.

### Have you ever thought...

- How do you know when you are truly loved?
- What does Jesus' birth tell us about God's love?

## Discover (1)

### Display and Read “God’s Word Among Us”

DISCOVER



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### God’s Word Among Us

At a given point in history, the Second Divine Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, enters the world and is born into our human nature. The Church gives us the entire Christmas season, which begins with the Christmas Eve Vigil on December 24 and ends with the Baptism of the Lord, after Epiphany, to contemplate this mystery of the Incarnation. The mystery of God taking on human flesh is so wondrous that we celebrate it for the entire Christmas season. During this season, the priest wears white or gold vestments, and the Church is decorated in those colors as well.

The feast of Christmas celebrates that Jesus is both human and Divine—fully God and fully man. We reaffirm this every time we recite the Nicene Creed. The readings for the Mass during the day on Christmas help us understand the Incarnation as an expression of God’s Word, or promise, to us.

The feasts of the season help us contemplate the Incarnation and how it applies to us. In the week between Christmas and New Year’s, we honor early martyrs, including Saint Stephen and the Holy Innocents. These feasts remind us that the gift of faith can lead to great earthly trials as well as great glory. Epiphany, the original feast of Christ’s birth, celebrates the coming of the Magi, the travelers from the East. The Gospel according to Matthew tells us their story to help us to understand that Jesus came for all people, not just for the Chosen People, the Jews. Jesus is the manifestation of God’s overwhelming generosity, the sacrifice of his Son that we might be saved.

- John tells us that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.” Do you think it is possible to understand a love that deep?
- What do you think it would take for people to focus on this meaning of Christmas instead of all the other things that get in the way?

**Ask:** What mystery does the Christmas season invite us to contemplate?

**Ask:** Why did God promise to send Jesus to us?

**Ask:** John tells us that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.” Do you think it is possible to understand a love so deep?

**Ask:** What do you think it would take for people to focus on the meaning of Christmas instead of all the other things that get in the way?

## Video Time

**Say:** Pope Francis tells us that Jesus is given to us by God as our peace and is love made flesh. Let us watch the video, “Jesus is Love Made Flesh. While watching the video, think about what this means during the Christmas season and throughout the entire year.

**Play the video clip.** Video Link: <http://youtu.be/kWPiZ9S55YQ>

**Ask:** What did you hear Pope Francis say to you?

## Live: Our Catholic Life

**Display and Read the following.**

## Happily Receiving and Giving

Christmas is all about being generous. We think about God's generosity in sharing Jesus with the world. We think about Jesus' generosity in coming to live with us on Earth. We think about Mary's generosity in sharing her newborn Son with many visitors and in the Temple.

**Generosity** is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit that helps us give or serve out of gratitude to God. The season shows how much we have to be grateful for. We make connections with family and friends at social events. We enjoy songs and celebrations that come from

### Fruits of the Holy Spirit

The twelve **Fruits of the Holy Spirit** are qualities that can be seen in us when we let the Holy Spirit work in our hearts. This season we are focusing on **generosity**.

our cultural roots. We seek and find the light that illuminates our souls.

So with gratitude inspired by the generosity of others, we are moved to be generous ourselves. In the Christmas season's spirit of giving, we gladly share significant parts of ourselves, to mirror the great gifts we have received.



**Ask:** What event of the Christmas season inspires you want to be generous?

**Ask:** What does Generosity mean to you?

**Ask:** Who has been a good example of generosity to you?

**Ask:** How was God and Mary generous?

## Faith Activity

### SUMMARIZE

Here are two Bible citations for passages about giving and generosity. Read the passages. Then on the lines below each citation, summarize what the passage means to you.

Mark 12:41-44

1 John 3:17-18

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

### Mark 12: 41-44

He sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums.

A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents.

Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury.

For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."

### 1 John 3:17-18

If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him?

Children let us love not in word or speech but indeed and truth.

## People of Faith Activity



**Tell** the children about Saint Nicholas.

**Explain** Saint Nicholas was a Christian bishop who helped the needy. After his death, the legend of his gift-giving grew. Saint Nicholas transformed into the legendary character called Santa Claus, who brings Christmas presents to children around the world. Saint Nicholas was born circa 280 in Patara, Lycia, an area that is part of present-day Turkey. He lost both of his parents as a young man and reportedly used his inheritance to help the poor and sick. A devout Christian, he later served as bishop of Myra, a city that is now called Demre. There are many legends about Saint Nicholas of Myra. One story tells how he helped three poor sisters. Their father did not have enough money to pay their dowries and thought of selling them into servitude. Three times, Saint Nicholas secretly went to their house at night and put a bag of money inside. The man used the money so that one of his daughters could marry. On the third visit, the man saw Saint Nicholas and thanked him for his kindness. He also reportedly saved three men who were falsely imprisoned and sentenced to death.

**Discuss** the image of Saint Nicholas and his role in Christmas.

