

# Come and See

Year 4

**Please note:** this file is an archived version of what we had posted on the old website (with a few formatting changes).

## **Theme 10: Jesus, born of a woman** (*Guide pp 112-117*)

### **Aims:**

- To appreciate the symbol of light in the celebration of the nativity;
- To explore the celebration of the Epiphany

**For the Catechist:** Light is a common theme in the story of the nativity and in the story of the Magi. God's light pointed to Jesus as the new star rising in the East. Isaiah experienced a vision of God's glory. However, he saw that the order at the time in Judah could not fulfil that vision, so Isaiah had the insight that God must be planning another way to realize this vision of God's glory. Isaiah prophesied the birth of a child to a young woman to be 'the prince of peace,' the wonder counsellor' "the wonder of God". At Jesus' birth, the heavens opened and sang of the Glory of God and witnesses followed a light to the child in the manger whom these witnesses identified as the child of Isaiah's prophesy.

**We Gather:** If you still have your Advent wreath, light the Christ candle and invite the children to talk about their Christmas memories, the sights, lights, sounds, smells, feelings, people, songs, stories. Connect all these wonderful sensual memories as signs of the joyful presence of God in the world.

**We Listen:** From the Bible share the Christmas story Luke 2:3-20. Discuss details of the story emphasizing "light". Then connect to all the Christmas experiences were signs of light. Have each name a person who was a light to them at Christmas and why each was. I would make a list on a large sheet of paper of the people who were "lights" to the children. Then offer an informal prayer of Thanksgiving for all those people. Now introduce the children to another story about how another group of people followed a light to find out about Jesus. Read the story of the Magi Matthew 2:1-13. Following a discussion of the story details, connect with the idea that we too are on a journey to find Jesus this year and to learn more about him. We are guided by God through Bible stories, through celebrations and each other. We may get lost and need help from others. We need to fall on our knees and honor God. We need the light of others to help us.

**We Respond:** As others who were listed were lights to us especially at Christmas now have them reflect on how they can be lights for others. (You will need to construct a large yellow star in advance and have a streamer for each child) Have each child put their name on a streamer and attach it to the star.(Keep this star for next time.) Again give thanks for all people of light. Sing verses of "Children of the Light."

**We Go Forth:** Let us look a little closer to the land where these Christmas stories took place. Wouldn't it be nice to visit the homeland where Jesus was born and lived? Many people do. The country is often called the "Holy Land" but its name is Israel. Look at the maps of Canada and Israel on page 80 of the textbook. Israel is bigger than PEI but only about the size of Nova Scotia. To get there we might fly from Canada to France in Europe and then fly south to Israel. Look at the map inside the front cover and point out that in Jesus' time this was called Palestine and there were three districts called Gallilee, Samaria, and Judea. Make note of main places like Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Cana, Capernaum, Mount of Olives, Bethany, Emmaus, Sea of Gallilee, Jordan River, and the Dead Sea. (See Blackmaster 11a for information about these. Don't overwhelm yourself or the children with too much information. ) (You can refer to these maps again as you meet them in future scripture readings.) Invite the children to take their books home and ask some family members to read pages 80 - 87 to learn a lot more about Jesus' homeland and some information about what life would have been like for Jesus. You might like to have some pieces of pita bread and some hummus for dip for a treat explaining this might be a food Jesus ate with this blessing: (see page 87)"Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for you feed the whole world with your goodness, with grace, with loving kindness, and tender mercy. You give food to all creatures and your loving kindness endures forever. Blessed are you, O Lord!" ( Note the connection between this prayer and the blessing prayed over the offertory gifts at Mass.)

## **Theme 11: "Jesus is presented in the Temple" (Guide pages 118 - 123)**

### **Aims:**

- To explore the meaning of the presentation in the Temple
- To celebrate Epiphany

**For the catechist:** This theme continues the theme of how Jesus is light to the world and how this truth has been revealed. Mary and Joseph were bringing their first born son, according to the custom of the Israelite people, to present him to the Lord forty days after his birth. This custom was based on the freeing of the Israelites from Egypt in the time of Moses and especially on the sparing of the sons of Israel when death passed over the land and struck down all the other firstborn males. Mary and Joseph would have to travel to the Temple where they would offer a poor family's sacrifice and present their firstborn son to the Lord. This occasion would become another revelation of Jesus as the promised one, the light for the world, in the story of Simeon and Anna. Understanding Jesus as light to the world does not happen automatically but requires our involvement and as we understand Jesus as light to the world we also understand that Jesus expects us in turn to be light for others. We see this in all the Christmas stories and now in the story of Simeon and Anna. They saw Jesus as the light and they in turn became light for Mary and Joseph and for us in the recall of this important event.

**We Gather:** Recall all the celebrations of light from the Christmas season. Recall the people and how they were enlightened by their experiences of Jesus. The disciples who followed Jesus were enlightened by him; he helped them see and understand things more clearly with greater purpose. Introduce the story of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple as the story of two more people who recognized Jesus as the light to the world, Simeon and Anna.

**We Listen:** Read together from their Bibles the scripture passage Luke 2:22 - 40. Focus especially on the words of Simeon. Discuss the details of the passage. Reread verses 29-32 and rewrite them in your own words in your Big Book of Remembering. Using the Presentation Song from Come and See books, have small groups of children prepare and present readings to the large group. Read over page 89 together and discuss how Mary and Joseph must have been feeling and what they were thinking. Again note Simeon's prayer, "Thank you, God, for keeping your promise. Now I am happy to die, for I have seen Jesus, the light of the world."

**We Respond:** Explain that on February 2 each year, we do have a special day called "Candlemas" when we remember that Jesus was revealed by the Spirit as the light for all people. Candles are blessed on that day. Have each child decorate a simple candle to use in the closing ritual and take home as a sign for the family that Jesus lights our way. A simple tapor candle could be decorated with glued designs and / or sparkles.

**We Go Forth:** Depending on your gathering space and musical talents, adapt the ritual celebration in your guide pages 123 - 124. Processions can be walks around in a circle with the Christ candle, a cross, the Bible, and the children's individual candles. Add the names of Simeon and Anna or figures of them to your Jesse tree if you still have it. At least add them around your prayer centre as they are now additional Epiphany characters revealing Jesus as Lord and light of

the world. Close with Simeon's prayer or your re-written version of it and a verse of Children of the Light. Everyone knows some of that! Remind the children to take home their candles and to share their stories of Simeon and Anna with family members. Maybe they can use their candles on their tables at mealtime or prayertime until February 2, the feast of Candlemas.

## Theme 12: When Jesus was 12 Years Old

### Aims:

- To recognize in Jesus someone eager to learn about the Jewish religious tradition
- To situate Jesus among his own people

**For the Catechist:** In the story of Jesus as a boy in the Temple, we hear Jesus speak for the first time. He says something about who he is before God: a son who seeks to be in his Father's presence. Jesus belongs to the Jewish culture which expresses a deep faith in God. The role of the Jewish family in handing on the faith was and still is of supreme importance. Through Mary and Joseph, first of all, Jesus is steeped in the religious tradition of his people. Then, as he grew into adulthood, he made the experienced faith of his childhood a fully personal commitment of himself to "Abba" his Father.

Every year Jesus would accompany his family to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of the Passover and to visit God in the Temple. You can imagine the excitement Jesus must have had to talk with the teachers in the Temple and ask them questions. He sought to know God with an intensity and a perceptiveness that astonished the doctors of the law. This would be a trait of Jesus for the rest of his life.

**We Gather:** Recall last theme's story of Mary and Joseph presenting Jesus in the Temple when he was only 40 days old. Remember Anna and Simeon and what took place. What important words did Simeon say about the baby? Recall the verses "When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom: and the favour of God was upon him." Jesus grew up like any other young Jewish child.

**We Listen:** Introduce today's story by sharing some thoughts on how faithful Jewish families made an annual pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of the Passover in remembrance of how God had set the Israelite people free from their slavery in Egypt centuries before when Moses was their leader. Groups of Jewish people would travel together on the four-day trip from Nazareth to Jerusalem. Discuss story-telling, singing, camping, etc along the way. See the map inside the cover of their books. After their last climb up the Mount of Olives, they would suddenly see the Holy City of Jerusalem. Read Luke 2: 41 - 52.. Discuss the story details. Imagine what Jesus said to Mary and what his words meant. Jesus is eager to know his Father's will. Read verses 51 -52. Listen to Song # 14, "Mary, Mary"

**We Respond:** Talk about the holy place of the Temple and the holy time of the Festival of the Passover. Then about other holy places and times and how we show reverence for such holy times and places. Use text books pages 93 - 97. Connect this discussion with the Sabbath Day using text books page 98 and how we observe the Sabbath Day by attending Mass in our parish church, spending time with family, and doing things together that are different from the routine of the other days of the week. Draw a picture of themselves in a holy place and time.

**We Go Forth:** Share a simple Jewish - like meal sitting in a circle on the floor. Say a blessing (Use prayer from text book page 87 or an informal similar prayer). Use pita bread, hummus, honey, goat cheese, yogurt, dates, grape juice, etc. End with a blessing.

## Theme 13: Jesus Announces the Kingdom of God

### Aims:

- To see how Jesus was filled with the power of the Holy spirit
- To understand Jesus' mission as the sign of God's kingdom

**For the Catechist:** Think about what the "kingdom of God" means to you. Jesus used this metaphor for God's activity amongst the people; God's compassion for the people. Jesus came to proclaim the "kingdom of God." The activities and person of Jesus announce the "kingdom of God." Through Jesus we know the love and compassion of God, we know what the kingdom is about. Through the parables Jesus tells we hear about the kingdom of God, its mysteries, its paradoxes, its surprises, its excess. We know the kingdom of God is knowing Jesus. To whom does the kingdom belong? The poor, the outcast, the grieving, the hungry, to those who come to the feast of God's love expressed in Jesus' love through his total giving of life.

**We Gather:** Discuss how we care for one another. Read the story on pages 100 - 101 in textbooks and discuss questions. Explain that caring actions like Amy's are important in welcoming God's kingdom on earth. It means spreading our love around to others.

**We Listen:** Remind the children about the story of Jesus in the Temple when he was twelve. He had said to Mary and Joseph, "Did you not know that I was in my father's house?" But then we do not read anything more about Jesus until he was about thirty years old. One day then Jesus felt the call to leave home. He had heard about John the Baptist preaching and baptizing, so he set off to the Jordan River. Proclaim and discuss Mark 1: 9 - 13. and page 103 in their textbooks. Emphasize that Jesus was filled with the power of the Spirit at his Baptism.

Then invite the children to listen as you explain that some time after this Jesus returned to his home in Nazareth. Where would he go on the Sabbath? He went to the synagogue in Nazareth. Read the guided imagery in your guide page 139 and invite the children to share their imaginary conversations with Jesus. What were the signs that God's kingdom was at hand? Jesus wanted the people to see God's loving care for the people.

**We respond:** Jesus wants those same signs of God's kingdom to be visible today. In the Our Father, we pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We pray that God's kingdom come, but more importantly we must do the things that help the kingdom be more visible in our homes, our communities and the world. Read Luke 7:22 to describe how Jesus described the kingdom. Brainstorm some ways the kingdom is visible today and ways we can help it be more visible.

**We Go Forth:** Sing "Come and See" Song # 16 and discuss its thoughts. Review the Remember Verse from books page 105. Have the children write in their individual books "The Kingdom of God is about..... and let them add some things they can think of to describe the kingdom of God in their own words. Decorate the page and the message. Add pictures if possible. Close with a blessing, "Go in peace and Remember 'The kingdom of God is about the blind seeing, the lame walking, the deaf hearing, the dead rising, the poor hearing the good news and (have each child

add his / her own thoughts from their pages. Encourage the children to take their books home and share the stories and pictures from pages 100 - 105 with family members.

## **Theme 14: Jesus Goes About Doing Good** (*Pages 142 - 147*)

### **Aims:**

- To learn the many ways Jesus brings hope and healing to people
- To recognize our call to share in Jesus' work for the kingdom

**For the Catechist:** Recall how Jesus points out the signs that the Kingdom of God is at hand. can we see the same signs today? In a study of the miracle stories we see the unconditional caring, the graciousness, the mercy and the power of God. To witness miracles is to recognize the presence of God, God has visited his people. In our response we are with Jesus transforming the lives of others by our compassion and caring actions. the miracles were signs of the kingdom of God, or "deeds of power" or "the work" of Jesus. The work of Jesus was to give people a sign of what God wants for all people, a foretaste of God's world, a world free of sickness, mourning, sadness, death.

**We Gather:** Discuss what work different people do in their community. Then ask "What kind of work did Jesus do? What was his work? Recall Luke 4: 18 - 19 & Luke 7:22 in which Jesus describes his mission. Recall some of the signs you discussed in previous themes and how these were signs of God's powerful love and presence among people. Listen to "Come and See" Song #16.

**We Listen:** Have groups or individuals look up and read each passage suggested in their texts pages 108 - 109 answering the four questions "Whom did Jesus help? How did he help? Why did he help? What did Jesus say?" Record the responses to develop a broad view of the different ways Jesus did the work of his Father. Then discuss how Jesus knew his Father's will? Discuss how Jesus knew the Scriptures of his Jewish ancestors and how he felt power go out from himself and another important way....read Luke 5:15 - 16. No matter how busy Jesus was he always took time to pray and he took time to teach others and us to pray...Invite the children to join you in praying the "Our Father"

**We Respond:** Have each child choose and illustrate through a cartoon strip one of the Scripture stories they have discussed. Share these.

**We Go Forth:** Read the Remember section on page 109 in text books. Invite the children to join in a prayer of blessing. "Now let us ask God's blessing on each other, that we may continue to share in Jesus' work with joy in our hearts. As a sign of blessing, let us stand and stretch our arms out toward one another. "Loving creator, bless each of us as we continue to go forth with Jesus to work with him and bring peace and joy into the hearts of the people we meet."

Encourage the children to share the material from their books on this theme and their cartoon strip with family members.

## **Theme 15: Jesus is Sent to Bring God's Love**

### **Aims:**

- To enter more deeply into the movement of the Holy Spirit in us
- To appreciate God's intimate involvement in our lives

**For the Catechist:** In the next three themes we see the image of Jesus derived from the Gospel of John whose Gospel is filled with symbol and story...each is like an icon. In this theme we learn of Jesus' night time conversation with Nicodemus about being born anew. This is the first Lenten theme, begun early because of possible missing gathering during March break. Easter is a celebration of life. God could not leave Jesus dead. God can not leave us dead physically or spiritually. Nothing stops God from loving people forever. We will be watching for the rich symbolism of life and new life which the Church uses. John gave us an enduring image of Jesus as the "Word" of God. God expressed in human form, in Jesus we get a glimpse of the Spirit of God, the enormous energy who shaped the universe. To this we are invited to belong as branches to a vine. 'Anyone who lives in love lives in God and God lives in him.'

**We Gather:** You may like to begin to look forward to the upcoming season of Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday, (February 25,2009) and which is so special because it is a time of preparing for the greatest feast that we celebrate in our Church. At Easter, we celebrate the greatest expression of God's love for us through the new life God shared with Jesus. God's love for Jesus is the same love God shares with us and we too share in a new life when we trust in God and do God's will. Sometimes it is hard to trust in this faith. Prepare the children to listen to a story about trust and the wind. Read together the story "The Tale of the Little River" from their books pages 115 - 116. lead the discussion of the story to an understanding that this is how the Spirit of Jesus works in our lives, that we are gently lifted up and carried along. Jesus promised "I will not leave you alone. I will send you a helper who will be with you always."

**We Listen:** Explain that you want to share a story about someone who wanted to know Jesus but was afraid. Share the story from your guide pages 154 - 155 about Nicodemus. Discuss details of the story. Note Nicodemus' fear and faith, Jesus' gentleness and sadness, the challenge. Note the reference to the wind blowing where it will. How are we born again of water and the Spirit? Our Baptism is a new birth in water and an anointing of the Spirit which fills our hearts with God's love. We live differently after Baptism!

**We Respond:** Compare the two stories about the great wind and the little river, Jesus and Nicodemus, what changes happened to the Little River, what changes might Nicodemus make? Would these changes be hard to make? Have the children draw a picture about wind entitled "The wind blows where it will" and have them "So it is with the Spirit" How may the Spirit carry them to do things they may think are impossible?

**We Go Forth:** Conclude with sharing the thought in the Remember Box on page 117 in their books and then with the Prayer to the Holy Spirit on page 13 of their books. Encourage the children to take their books home to share these two stories with family members.

## **Theme 16: Jesus Is The Living Water** (*Guide pages 158 - 165*)

### **Aims:**

- To explore our thirst for life
- To celebrate Jesus as God's gift of living water

**For the Catechist:** Water gives and sustains life. Our life is sustained in our relationship with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. People are sources of life to others so in a sense we "water each other back to life." In the Samaritan woman, Jesus saw a deep thirst for knowledge of the true God. She is not Jewish, but she knows what is expected in their relationships. Her people seek to quench their thirst by worshipping God on Mount Gerizim. The Jews worship God in the Temple in Jerusalem. Jesus tells her that the time will come when the worship of God will not depend on place. There will be a more profound worship "in spirit and truth." Jesus reveals to her that he is the bearer and source of this new worship. He is the Messiah. The woman follows him and tells everyone she knows about Jesus being the true source of living water.

**We Gather:** As in the previous theme you explored the wind, now you will explore the element of water. Look at text book page 118, and list all the ways you use water. Then invite them to go on a journey in their imaginations. Use the Guided imagery on pages 160 - 161 of your guide.

Do a group webbing of the word "WATER" developing all the qualities of water you can.

**We Listen:** Discuss the image of how we sometimes know someone who is hurt and when we pay attention and be kind to that person he / she can get over their hurt and begin to feel better. This is an example of how we are like water and bring life back to that person. They (or you) may share a personal example of this happening. Emphasize that someone waters and someone gets water. Water is important to life. Now tell them that you are going to share a beautiful story from the Bible about water. Proclaim John 4: 4 - 15 and share the rest of the story in your own words. She begins talking about Jesus being a prophet and about different ways people worship God, but Jesus explains to her that true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth which is what the Father wants. The woman states that she knows the Messiah is coming and Jesus says directly, "I am he the one who is speaking with you." She goes quickly back and tells the people of her village about her experience with Jesus and many of them also came to believe that Jesus was from God and is truly the Saviour. Jesus "watered the woman back to life" because she found Jesus whose love was real. He is the water that gives eternal life.

**We Respond:** Do Blackline Master #14 together.

Remind the children that we are in the season of Lent when we are preparing for Easter when we celebrate the new life of Jesus at the resurrection and new life for ourselves as we come closer to Jesus. At Easter we will be asked to renew our Baptismal promises. Discuss that at our Baptism water was poured over us as a sign that we are being washed in the living water of Jesus. We rejoice in coming to know Jesus through the water of our Baptism and that Jesus knows us

completely and loves us. Discuss also how we can help others enjoy a richer life through our friendships with them. Sing "Children of the Light" Song #12 together.

**We Go Forth:** Look at the pictures in their text books pages 119 - 121 to review the theme. Encourage the children to take home their books and the Blackline Master to share with family members. Close with "Go in peace and remember whoever drinks of the water that I will give will never thirst.." Have a bowl of water present for each to use and bless themselves.

## Theme 17: Jesus Shows Us the Father

### Aims:

- To join Philip in his longing to know the Father
- To grow in our understanding that Jesus and the Father are one

**For the Catechist:** The children have been exploring some of the mystery of who Jesus is. He is a teacher and a prophet. He spoke with such power and authority that the people felt God was speaking to them. He was a healer with power over sickness and sin so the people sensed in him the power of God. We all have the longing that something will "Show us the Father. Help us to know God. That's all we need." Jesus invites us to trust that when we know him, we know the Father. Jesus is the manifestation of God. Jesus is fully human and fully divine. The life and teachings of Jesus reflect the presence and actions of God.

**We Gather:** Discuss the saying, "he can't see the forest for the trees." What does it mean? Sometimes we miss the most beautiful things and truths because we are noticing the wrong things. Read and discuss "The Prince's Great question" from their books pages 122 - 123.

**We Listen:** In the last theme you talked about seeing with new eyes. In this scripture story they will hear about Jesus and his friend Philip. They were great friends, but Philip wanted to ask Jesus a question although he was a little hesitant. Read and discuss his question and Jesus' answer on page 124 in their books. Notice that Philip wanted to see God who was there all the time in his friend Jesus. He had to see with new eyes. He had to see the trees in front of him.

**We Respond:** When we love someone, we often recall memories of that person just to feel close to that person. Now it is a time for you to do that together, to recall memories you have of Jesus. You want to recall (1) what Jesus is like (2) how he helps people (3) how he heals people (4) gives them new life (5) teaches them (6) tells stories (7) has conversations with his friends. Tell the children you are going to make a "Jesus tree". Depending on how many are in your group, you can brainstorm memories about each of the seven ways of recalling Jesus listed above and list them under the heading or assign each of seven groups to brainstorm about one. Then have each child draw a picture about a different memory, cut out the picture and put it on a tree branch to make your Jesus tree. Listen to Song #17, What God is Like. Remember that everything about Jesus shows us things about God.

**We Go Forth:** Conclude with a prayer together inviting each to offer a little prayer in the format of "God our Father, I know you love me because Jesus loves me." "God, Our father, we know you understand me, because Jesus was understanding" etc. Model some examples and invite the children to pray. Close with the blessing, "Go in peace and remember Jesus said, 'If you know me you know my Father too.'" Encourage the children to share from their books with family members at home.

## **Theme 18: Jesus Goes Up To Jerusalem** (*Guide pages 174 - 181*)

### **Aims:**

- To discover that Jesus had enemies
- To witness Jesus' faithfulness to his mission in the face of opposition

**For the Catechist:** Jesus had followers who were very committed and some who were curious. Jesus always had his critics, but in this theme it will become apparent that opposition was growing. There was conflict about his healing activity, his forgiveness of sinners, about the authority with which he proclaimed the kingdom of God, about claims he made about Jewish law, about his association with sinners and outcasts. Jesus knew this and he knew the dangers that awaited him as he faced going to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. He would not turn away from what he must do. The leaders thought he was a blasphemer, but little people flocked to him and found him liberating. Jesus saw himself in a life of service to God and to the simple people. He had to be faithful to this life. He had to accept death to be faithful to what he believed and taught about his father. So his death was a death of service: a life poured out for others.

**We Gather:** Talk about experiences that people may have when they get in trouble even when they are trying to do good or do what is right. Focus on Jesus' kindness and care for people. Ask Did everyone follow Jesus? Were there people who did not like what Jesus said and did? Do the section on page 126 "Why Did Jesus Have Enemies?" Assign each of five groups or individuals one of the Scripture passages listed on page 126 to be the detectives and answer the two questions. Share responses. In the discussion note that Jewish leaders felt threatened because Jesus had many followers, and they could not accept some of the claims Jesus made about himself. Now imagine what was going on when his disciples knew that Jesus had "set his face to Jerusalem." What would you be thinking if you were there? Jesus was afraid of what might happen. He prayed intently in the Garden of Getheseme. He could not let himself be ruled by fear. If he ran away, it would mean that he did not trust God. He had to be faithful to his Jewish faith (celebrate the Passover), faithful to his Father's will (Trust) and faithful to those he came to serve (not run away from what he knows he should do).

Read Mark 1:1 - 11. Listen to "What God is Like" Song #17.

**We Respond:** Dramatize Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Have one take the part of Jesus, some as his disciples, most as the people welcoming and chanting "holy, holy, holy!" or "Hosanna" or "Help us please Oh Son of David". They could place their cloaks or strips of paper or real palms if you could get them. Have some just whistling and applauding. Do a procession around .

**We Go Forth:** Now you have a true story to share about a priest and some children who had to act with great courage like Jesus had to do on entering Jerusalem. Read "Father Julio" from your Guide page 180. discuss where they get such courage. Conclude with page 127 and the "Litany of Trust." Encourage the children to share from their books and their activities with family members at home.

## **Theme 19: Jesus Gives Himself**

### **Aims:**

- To see how the Last Supper helps us understand the meaning of Jesus' life and death
- To learn that the Eucharist is an invitation to live a life of love and service

**For the Catechist:** Try to think about what was in the heart and mind of Jesus as he enters Jerusalem, as he prepares to celebrate the Passover with his friends. Jesus knows his fate and that there is little time left. Could he be wondering how he can emphasize the full meaning of the message of his life and his coming death? To wash their feet!! An amazing example of servitude! If others are to share the love of God, they must understand the meaning of being servant to their brothers and sisters, to be attentive to the needs of others. He used this body of his to serve. "This is my body which is given for you." Even in death, Jesus exists for others. He continues to share his life with us especially when we share in the Eucharist.

**We Gather:** Invite the children to sit quietly in a prayerful atmosphere because you are going to do something very unusual which is only done once a year in our churches in many parishes. Use the "Ritual of footwashing " in your Guide pages 184 - 185. (Have one or more children prepared to participate in this ritual.) Then discuss the information in their textbooks pages 128 - 129.

**We Listen:** Have a goblet of wine (juice) and some bread (loaf). Discuss from what and how each was made. Invite the children to listen as you proclaim Matthew 26: 26 - 29. This brings together the two actions of Jesus at the Last Supper. Jesus wanted to leave behind a way for us to be united with him and with each other after he had died. Each time Jesus said for us to do what he had done. Jesus wants us to be attentive to the needs of others and be united with him by sharing his body and blood, that is the life and person of Jesus, in communion. What do we do when we gather on Sundays? In year two, we learned that the four actions of the Eucharist are to (1) gather, (2) listen, (3) bless and thank God and receive Jesus in communion, and (4) go forth. At Mass we who know and love Jesus gather as a community. We listen to and reflect on God's word which we hear from the scriptures. In the Eucharistic prayer we pray to God in praise and thanksgiving for all God has done for us especially through Jesus. We remember what Jesus did at the Last Supper and we ask the Holy Spirit to change our gifts of bread and wine into the gifts of Jesus' body and blood, and we share these gifts to make us more like Jesus and able to serve in the same kind of love as Jesus did so we can better be God's people. Then we are sent forward to live out that love in service to others.

**We Respond:** Read the poem, "Give Yourself" from the text books page 131. Have the children write or draw about a time they did or could give of themselves.

**We Go Forth:** Have each child share his / her story. After each do an acclamation such as "Jesus has given his life for us and so we do the same when we give of ourselves for others."

Encourage the children to attend the Holy Thursday services at your parish and explain that this is the time when the Church recalls all the events in the life of Jesus on the night before he died. Encourage them to take their books and drawings (stories) home to share with family members.

## Theme 20: Jesus Dies For Us

### Aims:

- To deepen our understanding of the meaning of Jesus' death
- To ritualize Jesus' freeing act of forgiveness

**For the Catechist:** Theologians make connections between the trees in the Genesis account of paradise and the tree of the wood of the cross. In paradise there was the tree of life whose fruit gave life and protected the eater from death. There was also the tree of knowledge of good and evil. After the first humans ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God banished them from the garden to prevent them from also eating of the tree of life. Christian tradition holds that the tree of life is the tree of the wood of the cross on which Jesus died and through which we do have the promise of eternal life. The tree of death is therefore the tree of life for all flowing from God through Jesus.

**We Gather:** Remember the previous themes and the events of the last days in the life of Jesus: the growing opposition to Jesus, the journey to Jerusalem, the faithfulness of Jesus to the truth he was teaching, the gathering for the last meal together with his friends, his taking, blessing, breaking and giving the bread and wine, the washing of the feet, the invitation to do these things in memory of him. Tell the children that today you will remember what happened to Jesus the next day which was the last day of Jesus' life.

**We Listen:** Read and discuss the text on page 133 to introduce the Stations of the Cross.

(As catechist you will be interested to note that most of the Stations in our Churches are the originally approved stations including the three falls, Veronica, and meeting his mother. Those approved in 1976 have added the Last Supper, Gethsemane, the second thief, and Mary and John.) Have 14 sheets of blank paper labelled I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV at the top with a short title for each. Explain that you want to guide them through the journey of Jesus in their imaginations, just as Christians follow on the route in Jerusalem to remember Jesus' walk to Calvary. Display one page at a time as you use either Option 1 in Guide pp 193 - 194 or Option 2 on pages 194 - 195. Before leaving each page invite the children to join in praying, "Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have saved the world."

**We Do:** Distribute the papers used above to the children and get them to draw a large picture for each "Station." These should be displayed at your parish church for others to see for the whole Easter season.

**We Go Forth:** (If you have time, there is a beautiful ritual in your Guide pages 196 - 197.)

If not, just have a simple ritual with a simple wooden cross. Have each child approach and reverently touch the cross and say, "Jesus died for us on the cross." Listen to Song # 6, "Keep in mind" Encourage the children to share some of this theme with family members using the pictures in their books pages 133 - 136. Also encourage them to join their families at the Holy

Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter services emphasizing that this is the most sacred and joyous feast of our faith. Happy Easter to You and Your Children!

## **Theme 21: He Who Was Crucified Is Risen**

### **Aims:**

- To share in the disciples' joy that Jesus is risen
- To learn what the presence of the risen Lord means to his friends and to us

**For the Catechist:** It is hard to grasp the full meaning of Easter. We can grasp some of it by the joy and surprise communicated through the eyes and the messages of the disciples. Much of nature is dull and lifeless but we know it is just waiting to burst forth in new life. The cross being a means of death also bursts forth into new life. If our lives are dull and lifeless, we also can reach for God's Word and enlighten our hearts and minds with the grace and glory of God. New joys, new surprises await all who are willing to share the Good News of the Resurrection. Nothing overcomes the love of God when we surrender ourselves and accept that love.

**We Gather:** Have your gathering stump decorated with white cloth, flowers, a burning candle, and a simple cross. with a white cloth. Notice the changes and discuss other signs of newness in their lives and environment. Why do we celebrate Easter at this time of year?

Invite the children to share their experiences of Easter. What do they recall about Holy Thursday? Good Friday? The Easter Vigil or Sunday morning? What stories do they recall hearing? What music? What actions? What about water & fire? Discuss the word 'alleluia' which has not been sung since before Lent began. It is our joyful word for "Praise God" who gives us new life.

**We Listen:** Read Luke 23: 50 -56 about the burial of Jesus. Tell them that we have stories about events and experiences that happened after Jesus' death. Read Luke 24: 1 - 11. Discuss why the eleven did not believe the women and what they think the eleven did next. Then read John 20: 3 - 10. Reflect on the passage and how the disciples felt and what they were thinking.

Then read another Easter story from John 21: 1 - 12. Discuss the feelings the disciples have been having from sadness of his death, guilt at having abandoned him, shock that his body is missing, surprise at hearing the women's story that they have seen Jesus and now the joy of sharing breakfast with him. Imagine their coming to understand what God has done and what it means in their lives.

**We Respond:** Recall the Jesse tree from Christmas time when you added symbols which told the story of Jesus' ancestry. Explain that now you want to prepare a 'Tree of Life.' with the making of symbols on cards each representing something about Jesus' resurrection. Have each child draw a picture about the Easter stories on the cards. Loop a string through a hole in each card and hang it on the tree (branch). Emphasize that the disciples recognized the new life in Jesus who they knew had died. This gave new life to their hopes and faith in the power of God and would cause them to live in a new way faithful in the knowledge that Jesus is of God. We also recall and celebrate this newness of life and this faith in a grand way every year at Easter and every Sunday at Sunday Mass. When we participate we live a new way with our God and with each other.

**We Go Forth:** Share the story from their books page 140. Ask if they know people who live like this for whom it is important to keep their promises. Close with the blessing, "Go in peace and remember, "Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead." Encourage the children to share this theme at home with family members using their books pages 138 - 141.

## **Theme 22: We Have Seen the Lord** (Guide pages 208 - 213)

### **Aims:**

- To enter into Thomas' profession of Jesus as Lord and God
- To ponder the question, "Who do they say that I am?"

**For the Catechist:** This coming to recognize Jesus as the Lord is a very important aspect of the faith of the disciples and our faith. The disciples had been attentive to Jesus during his life, but had difficulty seeing / understanding that Jesus was one with God and God was one with Jesus. Their recognition of Jesus, the son of Mary, Jesus, the carpenter, the teacher, the leader is transformed into Jesus the son of God, the Lord of all. The resurrected Jesus is convincing proof of Jesus as Lord who rules at the right hand of the Father. Jesus is God sharing in human life which draws us into a share of divine life through the Holy Spirit. As Thomas did, we proclaim Jesus to be our Lord and our God.

**We Gather:** Listen to verse 1 and the refrain of Song #20, "That Eastertide with Joy was Bright". Review the Easter stories they remember and arrive at a clear understanding of the Easter message that God raised Jesus to new life and some of the disciples have seen Jesus changed from the Jesus they had known but now they see him as the Lord who indeed came from God and is one with God who gave him new life. Jesus is the son of God and ruler of the universe. Today's story shows an example of how the disciples came to believe firmly in their hearts that Jesus is Lord.

**We Listen:** Read and discuss Luke 24: 36 - 43 and John 20: 26 - 29.

Read the imaginings of Thomas from your Guide page 211. Ask Why did the disciples not recognize Jesus? What is Jesus like now? (He appears, disappears, goes through doors, has a glorified body) He is Jesus but he has changed like a seed becomes a plant. St. Paul says that after death the human body changes to become perfect. Do the guided imagery on page 212. Then conclude with Luke 24: 50 - 53. (the Ascension).

**We Respond:** Draw pictures of the risen Lord. Then read Matthew 16: 13 - 17 and ask the children to write down what their response would be to the question, "Who do you say that I am?"

**We Go Forth:** Listen to Song #8 "Who do you say that I am?" and invite the children to share their responses. Look together at pages 143 - 144 in their books at the paintings. Encourage them to take their books and drawings home to share this theme with families.