

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Seventh Sunday of Easter**  
**Lesson Plans for Younger Children**

**Scripture: John 17:20-26**

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." An astounding discovery! The Easter news was spread to all who would listen. The disciples told people, who in turn, told people, and to this day, we hear the message — a message of weeping and then of joy that comes with the morning of a new day. We too like the disciples weep **AND** then delight in the joy bursting forth in us. We too are called to bring this message with our lives, and, if necessary, with words, to those who have not yet heard it.

**A Notation for This Week's Gospel**

One. Not diluted to a monotonous sameness. One. The abundance of diversity and people choosing to be together. One. Each of us, all of us, with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity, sufficiently huge, invites each one of us in.

**Theme: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church**

**Before:** This is the last session in the Easter unit. If this is the last time you will be with the children, you might choose to have a party (bringing refreshments that seem appropriate) or something of a review of what you have done during this unit.

A collage is the suggested art project, so bring an assortment of colors of construction paper, pieces of gift wrap, cloth scraps, glue sticks, scissors, and crayons. Option: you could bring a washable-ink stamp pad (available at most art supply places or from Discount School Supplies through their catalog or online) to let the children make prints of their thumbs to see that each one is different. Something to wash up would be most helpful: wipes in a container — or paper towels and a source of water.

**Option:** You could bring a camera to class and photograph the collage the children make with the children in a circle around the collage. Then, you could mail a copy of the photograph to each child.

**Beginning:** Invite the children to look for things that are the same about us and things that are different. For example, are we all wearing some kind of shoes? Then find something else that is different, for example: do we all have the same haircut? Find same color eyes and different colors of eyes, people whose family has a white car, those who have a little sister, etc. If you have the stamp pad, let the children see what their thumbprints look like.

**Prayer:** Gather by your altar and light the candle if you have one.  
Thank you, God, that you make each one of us different and that you love each one of us. Amen.

**The Story:** Jesus is praying to God before he goes back to be with God. Jesus prays for all the people he got to talk to while he was here on Earth. And he prays for all the people who will learn about God from these people. Jesus is asking God to help him make all these people see

that God loves them. Jesus wants the people to be one and to act together like God and Jesus do. Jesus wants the people to know that God loves them just as much as God loves Jesus.

**Activity:** Tell the children we are going to make a big collage, which is a picture made up of lots of pieces. Show the children the materials you have brought and let each child select a color or a piece of cloth or gift wrap from what you have brought. Then tell them they can cut their piece into any shape they want to represent themselves, and we will gather the pieces into a circle on a big piece of paper. When the collage is completed to everyone's satisfaction, invite the children to make a copy of their shape to take home.

If you have brought a camera, take the photo of the children with their collage.

**Getting Closure:** Gather the altar art your group has made during the Easter season. Ask the children to tell you about each of the pieces they have made.

If you brought refreshments, serve them.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the stories we have had for Easter. Thank you for making us unique and a part of each other. As we go into the world, help us to see, feel, and experience where you are among us. Amen.

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**Lesson Plans that Work**

## Year C – Seventh Sunday of Easter Lesson Plans for Older Children

### Scripture: John 17:20-26

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." An astounding discovery! The Easter news was spread to all who would listen. The disciples told people, who in turn, told people, and to this day, we hear the message — a message of weeping and then of joy that comes with the morning of a new day. We too like the disciples weep **AND** then delight in the joy bursting forth in us. We too are called to bring this message with our lives, and, if necessary, with words, to those who have not yet heard it.

### A Notation for This Week's Gospel

One. Not diluted to a monotonous sameness. One. The abundance of diversity and people choosing to be together. One. Each of us, all of us, with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity, sufficiently huge, invites each one of us in.

### Theme: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church

**Before Class.** This is the last session of the Easter Season unit. You might want to bring refreshments, have a party, and bring forth each of the icons you have made during this session to the party and let the children take turns explaining the meaning of each icon and the story behind it. If they would like to display them or offer them at coffee hour you might want to think about a way to display them for the church to see.

The passage for today is written in beautiful but very abstract language. You might want to offer a translation in more contemporary language, such as *The Message*.

**Beginning:** Describe to the children what you plan for today. (Party? Review? The activity described for today?) If this is to be your last session together for the year, tell the children.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the Easter messages we have been receiving and for the reminders of your love for each of us. Amen.

**The Story: John 17: 20-26** Invite a few children to read the passage, having them alternate by each sentence or two.

### Questions:

When, in Jesus' time on this earth, does this passage occur? (Just before the Crucifixion)

Put in your own words what Jesus is praying in verse 21? (Jesus wants us to be "at one" with each other as Jesus is with God.)

I wonder, if we really were "one," what kinds of things would be different in our lives? In what ways would we be "the same" and in what ways would we be "unique?" (To be "at one" with Jesus is to bring every bit of our individuality and see it 'shine' along with the individuality of every other person.)

What does Jesus ask for from God in verse 24? (That all of us would be with Jesus wherever he is.)

What things help us know that God said "yes!" to Jesus? (People told people, who told people, right down to today so we now know this truth.)

Let's see if we can put into our own words what Jesus is praying in verse 26. The elements are:

Jesus told us what God is like

Jesus will keep on telling us what God is like

God loves Jesus and that love will energize us

As a result, Jesus will be a part of one huge one that includes all of us.

**Activity:** Invite the children to create an icon that expresses this huge concept of "one." You might ask if people of other ethnicities not represented in your classroom, or people from other countries (other planets?!) need to be represented in the icon. When they have developed their icon, allow time for them to make one to go home with them. Who and what can be represented?

**Getting Closure:** Spread the icons out on a table and ask for volunteers to tell things about each of the icons. If they are going to be presented to the church, ask the children to arrange them on the poster board and write where each Bible verse can be found. If you have brought refreshments, serve them and give them time to reflect on the year. If appropriate, you can also play music as the children eat their feast.

**Closing Prayer:** Gracious God, we thank you for the gift each of us, for our uniqueness, for our unity, and for your movement among us. As we go into the world, help us to see, feel, and experience where you are moving among us. Amen.

### **John 17:20-26 (NRSV)**

20 'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word,<sup>21</sup> that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.<sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one,<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.<sup>24</sup> Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

25 'Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me.<sup>26</sup> I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.'

### **John 17:20-26 (The Message)**

<sup>20-23</sup> I'm praying not only for them  
But also for those who will believe in me  
Because of them and their witness about me.  
The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—  
Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you,  
So they might be one heart and mind with us.  
Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me.  
The same glory you gave me, I gave them,  
So they'll be as unified and together as we are—  
I in them and you in me.  
Then they'll be mature in this oneness,  
And give the godless world evidence  
That you've sent me and loved them  
In the same way you've loved me.

<sup>24-26</sup> Father, I want those you gave me  
To be with me, right where I am,  
So they can see my glory, the splendor you gave me,  
Having loved me  
Long before there ever was a world.  
Righteous Father, the world has never known you,  
But I have known you, and these disciples know  
That you sent me on this mission.  
I have made your very being known to them—  
Who you are and what you do—  
And continue to make it known,  
So that your love for me  
Might be in them  
Exactly as I am in them.

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**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Seventh Sunday in Easter**  
**Gospel Lesson for Adults**

**Scripture: John 17:20-26**

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." An astounding discovery! The Easter news was spread to all who would listen. The disciples told people, who in turn, told people, and to this day, we hear the message — a message of weeping and then of joy that comes with the morning of a new day. We too like the disciples weep **AND** then delight in the joy bursting forth in us. We too are called to bring this message with our lives, and, if necessary, with words, to those who have not yet heard it.

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**Theme: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church**

**Before Class:** You will be inviting the group to do an art response as one last way to unpack the Scriptures, so you will need to gather supplies for a collage. Look around your house and the church for scraps of bright material, small pieces of gift-wrap, magazines, tissue paper, construction paper, copy paper in assorted colors, ribbon or string, or other art supplies you might have on hand. You will also need glue, glue sticks, scissors, and plain paper on which to glue all the pieces and you are ready. If you have it, cardstock or poster paper will make a sturdier base.

**Beginning:** Tell the group that we have been responding to the Gospel primarily in words — and today we are going to try another response as we are each invited to respond in images. You may feel a bit hesitant to create images, or engage in art, however, this is your response and so we invite you to create in whatever way you are being called. We will be making a collage — bits of cloth or paper glued to create the concept of diverse people all at one. We will read the scripture and look for images. If the collage idea is not speaking to you, maybe you could write or journal your response.

**Opening Prayer:** God, we thank you for creating us and calling us to be wildly diverse as a people of God. Help us to see our diversity and our unity as a gift from you. Amen.

**The Scripture: John 17: 20-26.** Invite one volunteer to read the entire passage. Then allow a few minutes of silence before asking another person to read the entire passage. The second time through, you may want to read it from a more contemporary version like the Message that will make the abstract language a bit more clear.

**The Process: Create a Collage**

Our Gospel reading today invites us to think about how we are at one with each other, and at the same time, we are the individuals God created us to be. Invite the group to look through the materials that you brought and see which pieces or materials interest them. Invite them to create a collage that speaks to our unity, diversity, and uniqueness. How will we show where God is? Where Jesus is? Where the Holy Spirit is moving and empowering us? How can we show yourself, the church community, the wider community, the wider church, the world?

As you work, you can discuss what you hear in this passage or you can turn on some quiet music and let people work.

**Getting Closure:** As your time comes to a close, invite people to briefly share what they have created, what they heard, or how reflecting on the Gospel in this way worked or didn't work for them.

**Closing Prayer:** Gracious God, we thank you for the gift each of us, for our uniqueness, for our unity, and for your movement among us. As we go into the world, help us to see, feel, and experience where you are moving among us. Amen.

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### John 17:20-26

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25 'Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.'

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