Four Lessons for October 2018

October 7, 2018 – Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 14, 2018 – Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 21, 2018 – Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 28, 2018 – Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
The Joy of the Gospel
Marriage and Divorce
(Lower Elementary)

October 7, 2018 – Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview
In this week’s Gospel passage, the Pharisees challenge Jesus about marriage. Jesus teaches in response that marriage is a permanent institution brought together by God. He also teaches that the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like children. In this lesson, students will contemplate what it means to be children of God.

Directions
A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
B. Have your students complete the reflection on The Kingdom of God worksheet, and draw a picture of them with God, their Heavenly Father in the Kingdom of Heaven.

• Note: This Gospel refers to sensitive topics to discuss. Many students today come from different family situations that may include divorce and remarriage or single parents. It is important to be compassionate to these situations and affirm the goodness and love that God still brings forth from them. However, this does not minimize God’s original plan for humanity and marital love, which Jesus seeks to restore in our hearts.

Answer Key

Focus Questions
1. He made us male and female.
2. God is the one who makes the marriage. Marriage makes a man and a woman into one flesh. God Himself has made this bond, so no human being can break it.
3. Children.
4. The Kingdom of God.
Sunday Readings

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 10:2-16: Marriage and Divorce

The Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, “Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?” They were testing him. He said to them in reply, “What did Moses command you?” They replied, “Moses permitted a husband to write a bill of divorce and dismiss her.” But Jesus told them, “Because of the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.” In the house the disciples again questioned Jesus about this. He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” And people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.” Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.
Focus Questions

1. What did Jesus say about how God made human beings from the beginning?
2. Jesus is teaching about marriage in this Gospel reading. He said, “What God has joined together, no human being must separate.” What do you think Jesus means by this?
3. Who was the crowd bringing to see Jesus?
4. What does Jesus teach “belongs” to those who are like children?
The Kingdom of God

Directions: Answer the questions about God’s Kingdom.

Think about your parents or other family members who take care of you.

How do you feel about them? Do you love them? Do you trust them?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Why?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Jesus said that the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like children. Jesus wants all of us, children and adults, to love and to trust God like He is our Father. Because He is! God is our Father and we are His children. Just like our parents care for us and love, even more so does our Heavenly Father care for us and love us.

God is our Father and we are His children. And He wants to give us His Kingdom.
Draw a picture of you with God, your Heavenly Father, in His Kingdom.
The Joy of the Gospel

The Rich Man
(Lower Elementary)

October 14, 2018 – Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview
In this week’s Gospel passage a rich man asks Jesus what he must do to attain eternal life. Jesus’ answer is challenging to us all. In this lesson, students will reflect on Jesus’ teaching about the meaning of life.

Directions
A. First, have students complete the section labeled “Before reading this week’s Gospel” from The Meaning of Life Activity. They may work with a partner or independently.
B. Next, read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
C. Then, conduct a class discussion about the meaning of life using The Meaning of Life Discussion Guide.
D. Conclude by having students answer the remaining reflection questions from The Meaning of Life Activity. You may have them work with a partner, independently, or discuss the questions together as a class.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. What must I do to inherit eternal life?
2. Follow the commandments.
3. Go, sell all that you have, give to the poor, and come and follow Him.
4. He had many possessions that he did not want to part with.
5. Jesus taught that it is difficult for someone to enter the Kingdom of God, especially those with wealth. He used the analogy that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom.
Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 10:17-30: The Rich Man

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.” He replied and said to him, “Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth.” Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were amazed at his words. So Jesus again said to them in reply, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus looked at
them and said, “For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God.” Peter began to say to him, “We have given up everything and followed you.” Jesus said, “Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come.”

Focus Questions

1. What question did the rich man ask of Jesus?
2. What was Jesus’ first response to the rich man’s question?
3. Then the rich man told Jesus that he had observed all of these from his youth. Now what did Jesus tell him to do?
4. Why did the rich man leave feeling sad?
5. What did Jesus teach about how hard it is to enter into the Kingdom of God?
6. What is the only way for anyone to enter into the Kingdom of God?
The Meaning of Life Activity

Directions: Read about what the Church teaches about the meaning of life. Then answer the questions.

Before reading this week’s Gospel:

Directions: What are three of the most important things in your life? Why do you think they are important?

1. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
After reading this week’s Gospel:

Directions: Read about the Church’s answer to the meaning of life and answer the reflection questions.

The rich man in this week’s Gospel asked Jesus, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Another way of asking this question is “what is the meaning of life?” Jesus answered this question with His life. He showed us how to live. He showed us the meaning of our lives.

The Church has an answer to the question, “what is the meaning of life.”

God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven.

(Baltimore Catechism no. 6.)

List the four reasons that God made us:

1. ________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________________
Jesus told the rich man to sell all that he had and come follow Him.

1. What are two things that would be hard for you to give up if Jesus asked you to?

2. What is one way that you can begin to give each of those thing back to God? (For example, you might list your favorite food. One way to give it back to God would be to make donations to a food bank every month.)

1. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
The Meaning of Life Discussion Guide

Directions: Discuss the meaning of life with your students using the guide below.

- Explain the following to your students:
  - The rich man’s question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” is not so different from the question all of us ask throughout our lives: Why am I here? What is my purpose? What is the meaning of life? The rich man at least recognizes that he is made for something else, for God. But his understanding of what that means was lacking. The world around us is quick to give an answer to this question: to work; to make money; to be famous or powerful, and the best at what you do. The world’s answer to the question of the meaning of life, however, is very different from Jesus’ answer.

- Ask your students the following questions:
  - What did Jesus tell the rich man he must do to inherit eternal life? Follow the commandments. Notice that He only lists some of the commandments, all concerning one’s responsibilities towards others. The rich man enthusiastically says that he has done all of this from his youth.
  - What is Jesus’ initial response to the rich man, even before He speaks to him again? Jesus looks at him and loves him. It’s clear from this brief exchange that Jesus understands how misguided the rich man is. The rich man believes that he can earn his way into the Kingdom, which is contrary to everything that Jesus teaches.
  - What does Jesus tell the rich man to do? Go, sell all that he has, and come follow Him. Jesus recognizes that what is lacking in the rich man’s understanding of salvation is a true faith, a relationship with God. He has been following the commandments out of love for himself, not out of love of God. Therefore, in order to love God, he must remove those things in his life that are preventing him from having a loving relationship with God. For the rich man, it is his wealth and possessions. The same is true today; many people are attached to our wealth and possessions. This is what is difficult about entering into the Kingdom of God.
  - How is the list you made at the beginning of the lesson of important things in life different from what Jesus said is important in life? Answers will vary but should include some reference to the idea that our current culture tells us that the important things in life are self-centered while Jesus teaches that the important things in life are focused on God and on our neighbor.
• Explain that the Church has always had an answer to the question of the meaning of life. It is a relatively simple answer to say, but infinitely challenging in practice.

• Write on the board the following quote from Baltimore Catechism question no. 6:
  ○ Q. Why did God make you?
    A. God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven.

• Explain that this quote comes from the old Baltimore Catechism that many of our grandparents and great grandparents learned from. While it’s not as widely used today, we can still learn a lot from it.
The Joy of the Gospel

Ambition of James and John
(Lower Elementary)

October 21, 2018 – Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview
In this week’s Gospel passage, the disciples James and John confront Jesus with their own ambitions of greatness in the Kingdom. Jesus teaches them, and us, that to be His true disciple, we must be willing to serve others, sacrifice, and suffer for His sake. In this lesson, students will explore what the Bible has to say about being a disciple of Jesus.

Directions

A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.

B. Have students complete The Meaning of Discipleship activity. Students may either complete the entire worksheet individually, with a partner, or you may read the information aloud to your students. When finished, have students share their answers.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. To be seated at His right and left in the Kingdom.
2. Accept reasoned answers.
3. To be a disciple of Jesus, we must be willing to suffer and to be the least. In the Kingdom, the last will be first and the first will be last.
4. He has come to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. In other words, to offer His life so that others may live.
Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 10:35-45: Ambition of James and John

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” He replied, “What do you wish me to do for you?” They answered him, “Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left.” Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” They said to him, “We can.” Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared.” When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them and said to them, “You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
Focus Questions

1. What did James and John ask Jesus?
2. Jesus asked them “Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” He was telling them that following Him was hard. Do you think it is hard to follow Jesus? Why or why not?
3. What does Jesus teach about wanting to become the greatest?
4. Why does Jesus say that He has come?
The Meaning of Discipleship

Directions: Read about being a disciple of Jesus. Then answer the questions.

Jesus had many followers. Those who follow Jesus are called disciples. The word *disciple* means “student.” Jesus had many students. And since Jesus had many students, that makes Him a teacher. Jesus is the greatest teacher!

You are a student too!

What are three characteristics of a student?

1. ________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________

When you follow Jesus, you are His disciple!
Read the Scripture passages. Then, summarize what they tell us about being a disciple of Jesus.

- 1 John 2:3 - The way we may be sure that we know him is to keep his commandments.
- Ephesians 5:1 - So be imitators of God, as beloved children.
- John 13:34-35 - I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

What is a disciple of Jesus like?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
The Joy of the Gospel

The Blind Bartimaeus
(Lower Elementary)

October 28, 2018 – Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview
In this week’s Gospel passage Jesus heals a beggar of his blindness because of his faith in Jesus and willingness to “take courage” and stand out from the crowd. In this lesson, students will reflect on sacred art using a spot the differences activity.

Directions
A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
B. Have students complete the Healing of the Blind Man Spot the Differences activity. Tell your students to compare the two versions of the painting Healing of the Blind Man by Carl Bloch and find 10 differences between the two images. Have them circle the differences.

Answer Key
Focus Questions
1. He called out to Jesus “Son of David, have pity on me.”
2. They thought he was causing a disturbance, or they might have been annoyed with him. Also, maybe some thought that Jesus was too important to be bothered with the needs of a blind beggar man.
3. Jesus asked the blind beggar “What do you want me to do for you?”
4. Jesus healed the blind beggar of his blindness by telling him that his faith had saved him.
5. Jesus tells the blind man to “go your way.” From the moment he was healed, the blind man followed Jesus. This teaches us that Jesus never forces anyone to follow Him. He may give signs and miracles, but even then, His love is freely given and not forced upon us. We must, therefore, “take courage” and choose to respond to His invitation to follow Him.
Healing of the Blind Man Spot the Difference
Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 10:46-52: The Blind Bartimaeus

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.” And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, “Son of David, have pity on me.” Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you. “He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man replied to him, “Master, I want to see.” Jesus told him, “Go your way; your faith has saved you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

Focus Questions

1. What did the blind man, Bartimaeus, do to get Jesus’ attention?
2. Why do you think the crowd rebuked, or scolded, the blind man?
3. How did Jesus respond to the blind man?
4. What miracle did Jesus perform and how did it occur?
5. What does Jesus invite the blind man to do at the end of this story?
   What does he actually do?
Healing of the Blind Man Spot the Difference

Directions: Compare the two images of Healing of the Blind Man by Carl Bloch. See if you can spot 10 differences between the two images. Circle the differences when you find them.