The JOY of the GOSPEL

Lessons for June 2\textsuperscript{nd}, June 9\textsuperscript{th}, and Summer 2019

\textbf{June 2, 2019} – The Ascension of the Lord

\textbf{June 9, 2019} – Pentecost Sunday

\textbf{Summer 2018} – Lectio Divina
Overview
In this week’s Gospel passage, we read about Jesus’ Ascension into Heaven. Before He returns to His Father, Jesus gathers His disciples for His final words to them, which come with a mission – preach the Gospel to the nations. This command to the Apostles becomes the mission of the Church. In this lesson, students will create their own personal witness 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. Read the directions from The Good News Hidden Letters to your students. Then, have them find the hidden letters in the painting and write them on the lines. Last, help your students unscramble the letters to spell out the word for the Good News: Gospel.
C. Conclude the lesson by discussing the sacred art painting with your students by using the following questions:
   • What are some things that you see in this painting? Jesus, the disciples, angels, rays of light, clouds, a building in the background, hills, trees, and so on. Accept other reasoned answers.
   • How does this painting illustrate this week’s Gospel story? Jesus is ascending into Heaven before the gathered disciples.
   • If you could rewind this painting, what do you think happened immediately before this scene? Jesus gave His disciples the mission to proclaim the Gospel to the world.
   • If you could fast forward this painting, what do you think would happen immediately after this scene? Perhaps the disciples prayed, or they went home amazed, or, like the Gospel says, they returned to Jerusalem with joy and worshiped God. Accept other reasoned answers.
- Do you think the artist did a good job illustrating Jesus’ Ascension into Heaven? Why or why not? Accept reasoned answers.

**Answer Key**

**Focus Questions**

1. That He would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.
2. Repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
3. To be a witness means to see something happen and then tell others about what was seen.
4. Being clothed with power from on high – i.e. the coming of the Holy Spirit.
5. The returned to Jerusalem and praised God in the Temple.

**The Good News Hidden Letters**

![Image of Jesus' Ascension with hidden letters highlighted]
Sunday Reading


Jesus said to his disciples: "Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, raised his hands, and blessed them. As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven. They did him homage and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they were continually in the temple praising God.

Focus Questions

1. What is the first thing Jesus said is written about Him?
2. What did Jesus say would be preached to all nations?
3. What does it mean to be a witness?
4. For what did Jesus tell His disciples to wait in the city?
5. What did the disciples do after Jesus returned to Heaven?
The Good News Hidden Letters

Directions: Find the letters hidden in the painting.

Before Jesus went up to Heaven, He gave His disciples a mission. He told them to tell all the nations about Him and the forgiveness of sins. This is Good News!

Jesus told His disciples to preach the Good News.

As Christians, we use a special word that means “Good News.” Find the letters in the painting and write them on the lines. Then, unscramble the letters to spell out the mission Jesus gave to His Apostles. Finally, answer the question.

_____  _____  _____  _____  _____  _____  _____

The Good News is the ________________________________!
What are two ways that you can tell others about Jesus?

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
Overview
In the Gospel for Pentecost Sunday, Jesus promises His disciples that He will send them the Holy Spirit to teach them and to guide them. In this lesson, students will explore the various symbols of the Holy Spirit found in Scripture.

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. Read aloud the information from Symbols of the Holy Spirit while your students follow along. Then, make crayons, markers, and/or colored pencils available. Have your students create their own symbol of the Holy Spirit. When they have finished, have them share and explain their symbols.

Answer Key

Focus Questions
Option A:
1. “Peace be with you.”
2. “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”
3. He breathed on them.
4. The authority to forgive and retain sins.

Option B:
1. Keep His commandments and His word.
2. The Advocate (the Holy Spirit).
3. He will teach us everything and remind us of all that Jesus taught us.
Sunday Reading

Option A: John 20:19-23: Appearance to the Disciples

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.

Focus Questions

1. How does Jesus greet His disciples?
2. After He shows the disciples His hands and side, what does He say to them?
3. What did Jesus do to give the disciples the Holy Spirit?
4. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do?
Sunday Reading

Option B: John 14:15-16, 23B-26: The Advocate

Jesus said to his disciples: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always.

"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him."

Those who do not love me do not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me.

"I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you."

Focus Questions

1. What will we do if we love Jesus?
2. Whom does Jesus say He will ask the Father to send?
3. What will the Holy Spirit do?
Symbols of the Holy Spirit

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. He promised His disciples that He would. When the Holy Spirit came, the disciples went out and told everyone about Jesus. The Holy Spirit made them strong so that they would not be afraid.

The Bible uses many symbols for the Holy Spirit.

- On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came as fire.
- Also on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came as wind.
- When Jesus was baptized the Holy Spirit came to Him as a dove.
- The water we are baptized with is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.
- In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit led God’s people in a cloud.

On the next page, draw your own symbol of the Holy Spirit!
My Symbol of the Holy Spirit!
The Joy of the Gospel
Summer 2019

Lectio Divina

Overview
Summer is a great time to relax, to enjoy the outdoors, and to be with friends and family. It is also a great chance to spend some time in prayer. This lesson contains an essay describing Lectio Divina and a guide to help your students continue to read the Sunday Gospels over the summer and pray using Lectio Divina.

Directions
A. Send the Lectio Divina Essay home with your students to read with their parents or on their own. You may also read it together in class before your students leave for summer vacation to help them understand the steps of Lectio Divina.
B. Give your students the Lectio Divina Guide to use over summer vacation. Challenge them to read the Sunday Gospel every week and to spend a few minutes praying with it using this guide.
C. Have a great summer!
**Lectio Divina Essay (Lower Elementary)**

**Directions:** Read about how to pray with *Lectio Divina*.

*Lectio Divina* means “Divine Reading.” It is a way to pray with the Bible. Holy people have been praying this way for almost 2,000 years! The most important thing to do when praying with *Lectio Divina* is to listen. God is speaking to you in the Bible!

There are four steps to *Lectio Divina*. In Latin, they are *Lectio*, *Meditatio*, *Oratio*, and *Contemplatio*. Let’s learn about each step.

**Lectio:**

*Lectio* means “reading.” First, choose a short Bible passage to read. Then, read it slowly two or three times. Imagine that God is speaking to you as you read.
Meditatio:

Meditatio means “meditation.” After you have read the Bible passage, think about what you read. Ask yourself, “what stood out to me?” and “Why did it stand out to me?”.

Oratio:

Oratio means “prayer.” Now it is your turn to talk to God. Tell Him what stood out to you in the Bible reading. Tell Him how you feel about it. Tell Him anything you want Him to know. Talk to Him like He is sitting there with you.

Contemplatio:

Contemplatio means “contemplation.” This is the hardest step of Lectio Divina. We need to be quiet in this step. It is time to just sit with God and be with Him. And in the quiet, He can speak to our hearts. The best way to hear God is to be quiet and listen.
**Lectio Divina Guide for Summer (Lower Elementary)**

Summer vacation is here! It’s finally warm and sunny outside. You can play all day and hang out with your friends. You can also spend some time with God. A great way to do that is by praying with the Bible using *Lectio Divina*.

Try to read the Sunday Gospel every week during the summer and pray. It only take a few minutes! Use the following guide to help you!

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**Lectio**

**Step 1: Choose a Bible passage to read. Try this week’s Sunday Gospel!**

- You can find the Sunday readings here: USCCB.org/Bible.

**Step 2: Make the Sign of the Cross. Then say the following prayer:**

- Lord Jesus, help me to hear you speak to me. Help me to listen to you. Help me to pray today. Amen.

**Step 3: Read the Bible reading slowly.**

- Try to imagine that you are part of the story.

**Step 4: Read the Bible reading slowly again.**
• Listen for a something that stands out to you.

**Step 5: Read the Bible reading slowly one more time.**

**Meditatio**

**Step 6: Think about what stood out to you.**

• Why do you think it stood out to you?
• How does it make you feel?
• Is God saying something to you?

**Oratio**

**Step 7: Talk to God in prayer.**

• Tell God what stood out you.
• Ask Him to help you listen to what He is saying to you.
• Tell Him how you feel.
• Tell Him what you want Him to know.

**Contemplatio**

**Step 8: Sit quietly. Be with God.**

• Let God speak to you. Or, just be peaceful in the quiet.

**Step 9: Pray an Our Father. Then, end with the Sign of the Cross.**