

Curriculum Tips for Becoming Disciples

Volume 9

Office of Religious Education, Diocese of Wilmington

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Passing on the Easter Stories

From Kindergarten onward, at every grade level, the curriculum expects our children and youth to be able to tell the Easter story and to relate its amazing Good News for their lives. Why is this so important? Because the reality of Jesus' death and resurrection and our oneness with Christ in this Paschal Mystery is the center of our faith as Catholic Christians.

(Knowledge of the Faith)

Through guided imagery of Matthew 28: 1-10, our children can imagine the glory of God's angel announcing the resurrection of Jesus to the frightened guards and women. They can imaginatively place themselves at the scene, running to tell the other disciples the Good News. And then be surprised by Jesus on the way, hearing His words of encouragement to them, and embracing the Risen One with joy. How might they share this message with others this Easter? Performing a skit for other students? Making Easter cards?



Remember!!

The present and past issues of "Curriculum Tips" Newsletter as well as the most accurate version of Becoming Disciples curriculum are available on the Diocesan website: cdow.org. Religious Education Elementary Curriculum

The Luke 24 story can be re-enacted by children in their own words as they walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus, sadly pondering the death of their friend Jesus. Joining them will be Jesus, to listen to their questions and to talk about the importance of reading the Scriptures. He will also break bread with them. A prayer service that shares bread and thanksgiving can be celebrated by the children, as they discuss how Jesus is with them in a special way every time they share Eucharist with the community. This passage also reminds us that even though Jesus has "disappeared from our sight," we know that He is still with us because the Fire of His loving Spirit now burns in all our hearts. Children could paint a symbol of a burning heart and relate this to Christ's Sacred Heart.



John 21 invites children and youth to remember the night Jesus invited the disciples to "cast the net over the right side of the boat" so they could find something." This playful reminder of His first invitation to the fishermen to follow Him shows us the lighter side of Jesus. This gentle side of Jesus can also forgive Peter for his three denials by replacing it with three invitations to love and serve. Children can make a poster of the Risen Jesus or a collage of what they have learned about Him from the resurrection stories. They can also be challenged to create a comic-style booklet of Jesus in the 40 days after His resurrection or to create a song or rap, using some of the words Jesus spoke to the disciples.

Liturgical Education:

Children and youth are to understand the Lent and Easter seasons.



An Easter Wonder Trail



On Palm Sunday, set up in your hall an interactive experience that helps children and their families enhance their Easter celebrations.

Station One: Read the Easter story from one of the Gospels. Discuss how names for Easter, such as “the happiest of days,” “the festival of festivals,” reflect its joyful character.
*Have the children decorate the word JOY with markers, glitter, flowers etc.

Station Two: Share the story of the Easter bunny. According to pagan legend, Eastre, the goddess of spring, kept a pet bird that laid eggs in baskets. Eastre then changed her bird into a rabbit, but it continued to lay eggs. Christians took this story and adapted the symbols to celebrate the New Life of Jesus’ Resurrection and the new life that means for all of us, too.

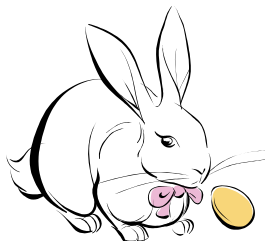
*Have children use paper and cotton balls to make bunnies.



Station Three: Since early times eggs that produce the new life of a baby chick have been Easter symbols. Eggs have long been decorated and given as gifts. In some cultures, eggs were not eaten all during Lent, so receiving an egg at Easter was a special treat.
*Have children decorate Easter eggs.



Station Four: Tell the story of how a butterfly first must be a caterpillar and then a cocoon and relate it to Jesus’ death and resurrection.
*Have children make cocoons out of plastic eggs and fabric butterflies which can be hidden inside.



Station Five: Talk about the Easter lily and how flowers make us think of growth and new life. Discuss how after the gray days of winter, spring flowers seem particularly beautiful. The Easter lily looks like a trumpet which is often used at Easter to make our alleluias more joyful.
*Have children create a bouquet of flowers to give to someone who is sick or, in the shape of a flower, create a spiritual bouquet of prayers offered for someone.

Station Six: Show children the Easter candle from the previous year and explain the symbols. Talk about Jesus as the Light of the World and how each of them were called to be lights of the world at their own baptisms, when the Easter candle was used to light their own baptismal candles.

Have families make Easter candles by pinning sequins and stickers, ribbons, foil etc. onto a white pillar candle.



Family Joy at Easter

Make These Easter Cookies Together on Holy Saturday Evening—And Tell the Easter Story.

Preheat the oven to 300.

Tell your children how Easter tells the story of God's power over death and of how sad things in our lives can become better.



Jesus suffered sadness in the hours before he died.

To demonstrate this:

Sprinkle a pinch of salt in your child's hand. Let them taste a bit and put the rest in the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers as they watched him suffer.

Put 1 cup of pecans in a zipper baggie and let your child beat them with a wooden spoon until crushed. Set nuts aside. Explain how Jesus was beaten before he was hung on the cross.

Let your child smell 1 tsp. of vinegar. Put in a bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, they gave Him only vinegar to drink.

But the story is also joyful:

Add 3 egg whites to the bowl. Explain that eggs represent life and that Jesus gave His life to give us life forever with God.

Add 1 cup of sugar to the bowl. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died out of love for us.

Beat ingredients with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white at Easter is to represent our purity in God's eyes because our sins have been forgiven. We are now cleansed by the forgiving love of Jesus who died for us.

Fold in the broken nuts.

Drop batter by teaspoons onto wax paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid.

Read Mt.27:57-60

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Mt. 27:65-66.

GO TO BED!

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty!

Read Mt. 28:1-9.

Blessing of the Easter Eggs



Use a dish of holy water and a sprig of greenery for sprinkling. First, sprinkle the Easter eggs, saying:

Bless, O God, these eggs, symbols of new life. Let them remind us of the wonderful possibilities waiting inside us to be called forth in loving our world—Easter gifts of joy and love and peace.

Next, sprinkle the family with holy water, saying, Bless us, your beloved children, Lord. Help us continue to grow in new life, remembering that Jesus Risen is always with us. Amen. Alleluia!

Will you help us evaluate the “Curriculum Tips” Newsletter?

Thank
You
For
Your
Help!



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1. **What parts of the newsletter did you find helpful?**
2. **What suggested activities did you try that worked?**
3. **What topics would you like addressed in the future?**
4. **What feedback did you receive from parents about the Family Page?**
5. **Is there an activity or prayer experience you have used that you would like to share in the newsletter?**

Did you know that NCEA has designated April 25th as “Pastor Day?”

Did you know that RCL Benziger Publishers offers you 4 free
Pastor Appreciation Certificates to honor your pastor?

Go to www.faithfirst.com. Click on the Kids Only Club site/
Additional activities/Grade 4 Chapter 4.

Say



Thanks!