

Children's Activity: Cheerful Giving

This children's lesson is written for a 60-minute session. Most of the time should be spent on the object lesson, which is an adaptation of *Lectio Divina*. There are optional activities for different age groups offered as a beginning to the lesson. Time adaptations can be made to the *Lectio Divina* activity for different age groups.

Option 1 - READ A BOOK (YOUNGER ELEMENTARY THROUGH 2ND GRADE)

Read the book *Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen. From the seemingly endless box of yarn, Annabelle knits clothing for everyone around her, tempering the ill-tempered, and creating beautifully patterned warmth for people, animals, and objects, alike. When a greedy clothes-loving archduke tries to buy - then steal - the box for himself, he discovers that ill-gotten gains bear no fruit - or in this case, yarn.

After reading the book, lead a discussion in which you ask participants how they can give gifts to others and give those gifts cheerfully. You can also point out that when we give gifts, we are offering them with love for others in the world around us.

Option 2 - PLAY A GAME (2ND - 5TH GRADERS)

Supplies Needed: Wrapped and decorated box with slips of paper inside with words such as the Fruits of the Spirit (love, peace, patience, joy, etc.). The Fruits of the Spirit are found in Paul's letter to the Galatians 5:22-23. Children should be able to take out the slips easily.

Have the children sit in a circle. The leader will provide these instructions:

The person to my right is going to take this box and retrieve a slip of paper. They will then pass the box to the person to their right and they will take out a slip of paper. We'll go all the way around the circle until everyone has a slip of paper.

Now, Look at the word on your slip of paper. Let's start with the person to my right. Act out the word or tell a story about the word. (And then continue until all the children have acted out the word on their paper.)

Discuss

- What is it like to receive a gift from another person?
- What is it like to give a gift?
- How could you give _____ (one of the words) as a gift to another person?
- What is it like when someone gives you _____ (one of the words) or is _____ with you? For example, gives you love or is patient with you?
- How does our giving gifts connect to the way we love others?

SCRIPTURE READING

Read the One Great Hour of Sharing focus text.

2nd Corinthians 9:6-7 from the NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION:

⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

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ACTIVITY - FIND THE SCRIPTURE

Supplies needed: Notecards with the phrase “God love a cheerful giver” broken up so that no one has all of the words or letter. They will have to rely on one another to complete the phrase.

Example:

GO	D	LO	VES	A	C	HEER	FUL	GI	VER
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The leader will provide these instructions:

Each of you is going to take one of the cards and you will work together to complete a phrase with the cards. The phrase is based on the scripture you just heard

Discuss

- *What it was like to work together - like each had a gift to offer the group?*
- *What happened during the activity?*
- *Did everyone get along?*
- *Were there any problems?*
- *Did you see how it could be loving (or unloving) when we share (or do not) with others?*

OBJECT LESSON – LECTIO DIVINA FOR CHILDREN

Supplies needed: Art supplies as desired, a Bible.

This lesson is an adaptation of the ancient practice of Lectio Divina. In the simplest terms, Lectio is “divine reading” or a reflective process of reading scripture in four stages. Generally, the same passage of scripture is read 4 times - reading (lectio), meditate (meditatio), pray (oratio), and contemplate (contemplatio).

In this exercise with children, they will hear the One Great Hour of Sharing scripture from the New International Version (above) or any translation of choice.

After reading the scripture the **first time** (reading), ask the students if there was a word or phrase which they remembered. Have them turn to their neighbor and share the word. Give them about 2-3 minutes to do this.

After reading the scripture the **second time** (meditating), ask the students to draw a picture depicting the scripture. Give them about 10 minutes to do this.

After reading the scripture the **third time** (pray), ask the students to offer different ways they can be generous and giving toward others. After everyone has had a chance to share, take time to offer a short prayer. Give about 2-3 minutes for this portion of the exercise.

After reading the scripture the **fourth time** (contemplate), ask the students to work together to perform a skit or write a short song incorporating the scripture. Give them about 10 minutes for this portion and then allow them to share what they develop.

** Please note, this activity can be adapted for younger age groups by either choosing one or more of the four segments of *Lectio Divina* or shortening the particular activity to a more appropriate time frame (like instead of 10 minutes, it could be five minutes.)