

LESSON 25: The Mission of Jesus

AIM

To lead the children to understand that the Church continues the mission of Jesus by bringing the Good News of God's loving concern to the world. (2.4.3)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the reason for the Church's existence.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Display a flashcard** with the following words of Jesus on it:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because God has chosen me to bring the Good News to the poor." [Luke 4:18]

- 2 **Good News:** Mime a 'good news' incident. Make a list of other good news events suggested by the learners and discuss with them how good news makes people happy, for example:

- children are excited when they hear the good news that they have passed a test well.
- sick people are overjoyed when they hear the good news that they are going to be well again.
- the best news we can hear is that someone loves and cares about us.

- 3 **The Good News of God's Kingdom:** Jesus came to share with us Good News:

- that God loves us all and always will.
- that this love is visible in God's Kingdom of justice, peace, love, joy, healing and forgiveness that is coming to the Earth.

Tell the story of the Roman soldier's servant [Matthew 8: 5-11]. Jesus spoke and acted as God would speak and act: he included everybody, especially the poor and downtrodden.

Draw attention to the flashcard. With these words from the prophet Isaiah, read in the synagogue, Jesus started his public ministry.

- 4 Invite the learners to become '**Star Makers**'. They use black paper as a background, and paste onto it cut out yellow stars that pierce the darkness. They write on their star exactly how they will bring light into the darkness of people's lives.

- 5 **Three Ways of Serving:** Jesus' mission is seen in three ways. We may say he had three tasks:

- **PRIESTLY TASK** - to bring the people to God, and God to the people.
- **PROPHETIC TASK** - to speak God's Word to the people, teaching them how to live in the Kingdom.
- **LEADERSHIP TASK** - to lead the people towards the Kingdom by serving their needs.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Flashcard (1)
- * Bible (3)
- * Black and yellow paper, scissors, paste (4)
- * Bible, prepared reader (7)
- * ♪ *God's Spirit Is in My Heart, or All Over the World* (7)
- * Newspaper clippings (9)
- * Poster board, glue, scissors, pens (10)(11)
- * Paper, pencil crayons (12)

- 6 **The Church Spreads the Kingdom:** Jesus lived in one place and time as an individual person. He was a Palestinian Jew two thousand years ago. But he continues his presence in all places and times in us, the community called Church. Two thousand years ago Jesus was present in the body of a single man. Now he is present in the body of a community, the Church. The community called the Church is an extension of Jesus Christ's life. Jesus promised, "I am with you always, even to the end of time." [Matthew 28:20] We share in Jesus' work of bringing about God's Kingdom. We are called to be followers of Jesus, not just admiring what he did, but striving with God's helper, the Spirit, to do what he did.
 - 7 **Jesus promised a helper** for the task of spreading the Good News. Choose a learner before the lesson to read the story of Pentecost [Acts 2: 1-4]. In conclusion, sing an appropriate song, like *God's Spirit Is in My Heart*, or *All Over the World*.
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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 8 Find **poems, songs, stories** which tell of Good News. Make a display.
- 9 Collect **newspaper clippings**. Let the children sort them into 'good' and 'bad' news.
- 10 Edit, design and publish this month's '**Good News**' **newspaper** for the school.
- 11 Make a **poster**, announcing the Good News.
- 12 Pretend you are a **news announcer on TV**: Draw yourself and one of the good news items that you are reporting on.
- 13 Learners **commit to memory** one of the following scripture verses:
"I did not come to be served but to serve." [Matthew 20: 28]
"As I have loved you, so you must love one another." [John 13: 34]

LESSON 26: The Church – A Visible Symbol

AIM

To develop the children's understanding that the Church is called to be a visible sign of the Kingdom of God. (2.4.2)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the Church as a visible sign of the Kingdom of God.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Begin the lesson by inviting the learners to recite the **Lord's Prayer**. What is the Kingdom of God? Review the discussion about the Good News of the Kingdom from LESSON 25, ACTIVITY 3.
- 2 **Experience of Wind:** Discuss how wind brings life and movement to everything it touches. Ask for concrete examples such as clouds racing across the sky; leaves on a tree rustling; windmills turning; the water ripples and sailboats sail. Ask questions such as: Can you 'see' the wind itself? Can you feel it when it blows on your face/hair? How can you tell if it is a breeze or a wind?
- 3 **The Kingdom of God** is a bit like that. It has no armies, soldiers or taxes; it cannot be 'seen' with human eyes; it is not a place on a map. We can see its effect as it changes and moves people's hearts. We can feel its harmony, strength and love. The kingdom is the result of our living so that all who see us know what it means to do God's living will.
 "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven" [Matthew 6:10].
- 4 **Jesus told many stories** about the Kingdom of God. He said that the Kingdom of God is like:
 - A mustard seed [Matthew 13:31-32]
 - Leaven or yeast [Matthew 13:33]
 - A treasure [Matthew 13:44]
 - A pearl [Matthew 13:45-46]

Ask children to find these references in the bible and to illustrate them. The Kingdom of God is small and hidden, yet it is the most valuable thing a person can possess. Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these (other) things will be given you besides." [Matthew 6:33]
- 5 **Looking for Signs of the Kingdom**
 Ask children to look through newspapers and magazines for signs of God's kingdom now. Guide them to search for pictures of love, tenderness, kindness, joy, hard work forgiveness, healing and justice. Remember that all these are signs of God's presence and power in our world. Place the articles on a board under the heading: SIGNS OF GOD'S KINGDOM.



WHAT YOU NEED

Bibles (4)(7)

Newspaper, magazines,
scissors, board, heading (5)

♪ *Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God* (8)

Table for learners to complete (9)

Story (10) ⇨

Drawing materials, scissors,
glue (11)

- 6 **Need for community:** Jesus knew that people need community, so he founded his Church. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit came to make the church strong. Jesus lived in one time and place as an individual person. He continues his presence in all places and times as a community, the Church.

As Jesus was the most perfect sign of God’s love, so his church is called to be the visible sign of God’s Kingdom. In this visible sign of Church, we sense an invisible reality - remember the wind? You can’t see it but you know it is there because we can see its effects. The invisible reality is the harmony that God’s kingdom brings inside of us when we live according to God’s Law of Love. Then we become like little lights, little signs of God’s kingdom.

- 7 **What is God asking me?** Living this out, we the church show signs of the difference the kingdom makes. “See how those Christians love one another” [Acts 4:34]. Ask the learners to look up the following verses: [Matthew 22: 36-40], [John 13: 34-35]. What does it mean to be a sign of God’s Kingdom?

- 8 **Sing:** *Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God.*

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 9 **Signs of friendship:** Friendship is like Kingdom: it cannot be seen. But we know it is there through certain signs. Explain how each sign either helps or hurts a friendship.

SIGNS	SIGN OF	HELP OR HURT?
Frowning		
Walking over to someone who is all alone		
Laughing at someone’s mistakes		
Smiling		
Whispering about someone		
Inviting someone to join in a game		
Offering to lend someone a pen		

- 10 Tell the following **story:** THERE ARE TWO SEAS

There are two seas in Israel. One is fresh and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it, and stretch out their roots to sip its healing waters. Along its shores the children play. The River Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. So it laughs in the sunshine. And people build their houses near it and birds make their nests: and every kind of life is happier because it is there. The River Jordan flows on south to another sea. Here is no splash of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, no children’s laughter. Travellers choose another route, unless on urgent business. The air hangs heavy about its waters, and neither person, nor beast, nor bird will drink. What makes the difference in these neighbour seas? Not the River Jordan. Not the soil in which they lie; not the country around about.

GRADE 4

This is the difference. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it, another flows out. The giving and receiving go in equal measure. The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. Every drop it gets it keeps. The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. The other sea gives nothing. It is named the Dead Sea.

There are two kinds of people in the world. There are two seas in Israel.

(Bruce Barton)

- 11 Fruits of the Spirit:** Learners may draw a large tree with a symbol of the Holy Spirit above it. They place on the tree, the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the form of apples named: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control [Galatians 5:22].

TO REMEMBER

The Kingdom of God is the reign of God over people. It happens wherever people live in harmony with the will of God.

LESSON 27: Bringing Good News

AIM

To explore the image of the Church as a herald or bringer of Good News. (14.3.4)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the idea of the Church as a herald or bringer of Good News.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Everyone likes Good News:** Ask questions like, How do you feel when you hear someone saying, “I’ve got good news for you”? When was the last time you heard good news? Ask children to report on it, using the following guidelines:

 - Who announced the good news?
 - What was the good news?
 - How did I feel?
- 2 God’s Word is Good News:** When we read the Bible or listen to the readings at a celebration of the Eucharist we hear good news from God. It may be just one word which helps us, it may be a truth that we suddenly understand. Or it may be a story about someone that we can learn from. Point out that the word ‘gospel’ means good news.
- 3 Heralds** are people who spread important news. Invite the learners in groups to refer to the following scripture passages:

 - Noah sends out a dove [Genesis 8:6-12]
 - Strangers visit Abraham [Genesis 18:1-10]
 - John the Baptist [John 1:19-28]
 - Mary Magdalen and the disciples [John 20:11-18]

In these stories who was the herald, and what was the good news brought?
- 4 The Good News for Christians** is especially the person, Jesus Christ. Jesus is God’s fullest and most important Word to us [John 1: 1-5]. The apostles had this good news to share with everyone: “God’s Son, Jesus is risen from the dead. He is with us always.”
- 5 Jesus** himself was an extraordinary herald as he travelled around the countryside proclaiming the good news of God’s Kingdom. He commissioned his apostles to go to the four corners of the earth to preach the Good News and to baptize people in the name of God.
- 6 The Church announces the Good News:**

The Church announces what God has done and is doing through Jesus Christ. This is done through its worship, its preaching and teaching, and through what its members say and do. The way that they live out their faith in God can bring the Good News of God’s love and care to the many sad, angry or lonely people in the world.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Bibles (3)
- * ♪ *Our God Reigns* (8)
- * Coins (9)
- * Seeds and containers, soil and cups for water (10)
- * Newspapers and display material (13)
- * The story of St Christopher (14)

- 7 **We can be Good News to Others:** God speaks to us in many ways about the love he has for us. He makes the Good News alive for us and does not want his message to stop. He wants us to be heralds of his great love for us, so we are called to be heralds of the good news that God loves us. Discuss ways that we can be heralds of God's great love. You might find a useful activity for the lesson below.
 - 8 **Song:** *Our God Reigns*
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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 9 Study **the image on a coin**. Discuss its meaning for us (tells of country, currency, value) Ask children to design their own coin, with their own symbol of themselves on it. Encourage them to share how it could help others to know something special about themselves. Or ask them to design a coin for the Kingdom of God.
- 10 What is the good news that **a seed** carries inside it? Show some different seeds, pointing out that they contain the blueprint of an enormous tree, a fruit-bearing plant or a beautifully coloured flower. Discuss the fact that the form, shape and design are all contained in that tiny seed. Distribute bean or marigold seeds and paper cups (or let children bring their own containers).

They must put their names on their containers. Point out that we can make God's love real for others, just as these plants will make their presence felt as the seeds grow under our care, if we tend them carefully.
- 11 Encourage children to help create a display of **Good News to Tell** – this may include newspaper articles, songs, poems, and stories.
- 12 Design, edit and publish a school magazine or newspaper called **This Month's Good News**.
- 13 Give children the opportunity to sort **newspaper articles** into Good News and Bad News.
- 14 Tell the legend of **St Christopher**. The name Christopher means 'One-who-carries-Christ'. Christopher was probably not a historical figure, but he demonstrates the calling of the Christian to be a carrier of Christ to others.

LESSON 28: Called to Serve

AIM

To help children realise that the Church is called to serve people in establishing the Kingdom of God on Earth. (14.2.4)

OUTCOME


Learners understand the Church as the community which is faithful to the mission of Jesus.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Talk about leaders:** What do they do? They lead the way. Use the example of children's own family: who is the leader there? Who is the leader of our country? Help children make the link that a leader is someone who serves.
- 2 **Jesus** himself showed the apostles what it meant to be a leader when he washed their feet at the Last Supper. Jesus taught his apostles to serve others. Tell or read the following story: [Mark 9:33-35; 10:45].


One day the apostles were walking down a road. They talked about how important their work was. They argued about whom among them was the greatest. When they reached town, Jesus asked, "What were you arguing about?" The apostles were so ashamed that they did not answer. Jesus sat down and taught them an important lesson. He said, "Whoever wants to be the greatest must be the least and the servant of all. I did not come to be served but to serve."

- 3 Make an **outline of the human body** on a large sheet of paper, showing the head, ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands, feet, legs, and so on. Invite the learners to describe the service each part performs for the whole body, and write it up on the paper.
- 4 One of Jesus' followers, Paul, taught the people what it means to be a member of the Church. Paul told the people that **the Church is like a body**. Each of our bodies has a head, hands, feet, nose, ears and so on. Every part of a person's body is important. No part can get along without the others. In the same way, everyone in the Church is important. We need to work together, just like the many parts of a body. Paul explained it this way: Christ is like one body that has many parts. Each part needs the others. If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I don't belong to the body," it would still be part of the body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" The head cannot say to the feet, "Well, I don't need you!" All the parts of the body need one another. Paul ends his description of the Church by saying, "So, all of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it." [1 Corinthians: 12:12-27]
- 5 **The Domestic Church - The Family**

Hand out the worksheet or make a poster illustrating the different dimensions from family to universal Church.  ⇨ Explain to the children that the Church is where God lives, and God lives in our families too. Discuss the fact that there is more to belonging to a family than just living in the same home! Members of a family share so many things together! Fun and games, outings, meals, tidying up and working together. There are times of sadness



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Bible (2)(4)
- * Large sheet of paper (3)
- *  Copies of the worksheet (5) ⇨
- * Large sheet of paper (9)(10)
- * Coloured paper (red, yellow, orange) or coloured pencils with plain white paper (11)
- * Old magazines for collages (12)

when someone is ill or far away. There are also times of joy when the members of a family have a celebration. These are the things that unite a family. Encourage children to talk about some of their favourite times with their family.

6 The parish is like a family because its members work together, help each other, pray together and share sorrow and celebration. Ask the learners to name their parish or faith community. Point out that there are many different tasks to be done in the parish:

- The Priest leads the celebration of the Eucharist and the other Sacraments, and preaches the Good News.
- The Deacon assists in the priestly ministry.
- People from the parish assist with various ministries. There are –
- Readers who proclaim the Word of God,
- Ministers of the Eucharist,
- Music ministers,
- Ministers attending to the Sick,
- Peace and Justice workers,
- Parish Council members who help to manage the work of the parish.

7 The Local Church - The Diocese

Just as our family belongs to a wider community, so too the churches form part of a wider community. In the Catholic Church, this wider community is called a diocese with the Bishop as its leader and teacher.

8 The Universal Church

The Catholic Church is a community that has spread all over the world. Everywhere it works to build up the Kingdom of God. The Pope is the spiritual leader of the Catholic Church. Remember to include other Christian churches in this discussion, especially those which have members present in the class.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

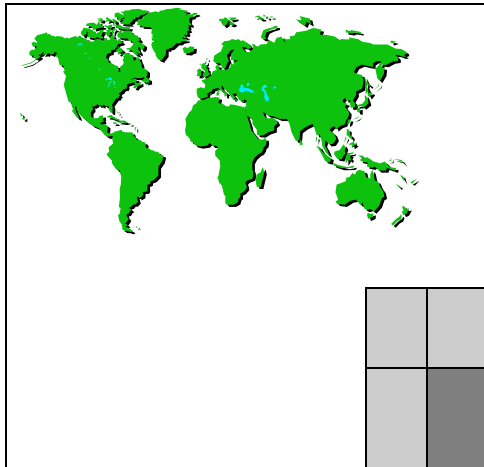
9 The Good Things we Do: Give the children the following instructions: “On a large piece of paper write the names of the persons in your family. Let each person list all the good things he or she knows how to do. Then have each person list some good things under the other names. Talk about the way these gifts can be used to bring the Kingdom about. Ask each family member to decide on one good thing to do this week to show that they are part of the Body of Christ.”

10 Build a Church: Draw the outline of a church on a large piece of newsprint. Encourage children to paste a paper “brick” inscribed with the gift or quality that they will use to help build the church.

11 The learners make a ‘flame’ for each person in their family. They write their names on the flames, and place them in a box. They draw one to pray for each day.

12 Draw a large circle to represent the world. Divide children into groups. Encourage them to make their piece of the world a better place. Mark off a section to represent their effort. Let them draw on it or create a piece of collage.

Families in the Church



MY FAMILY IN THE PARISH

FILL IN:

I am a child of God.

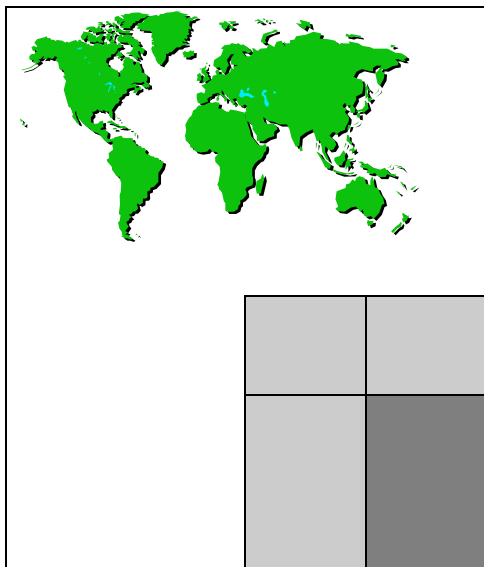
My first name is:

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I belong to a family.

My family name is

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MY PARISH IN THE DIOCESE

My family belongs to a parish.

My parish is

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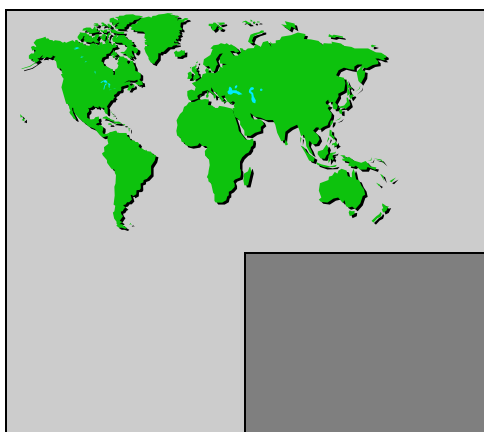
My parish belongs to a diocese.

Our diocese is

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DIOCESES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Aliwal North	Kokstad
Bethlehem	Kroonstad
Bloemfontein	Mariannhill
Cape Town	Oudtshoorn
De Aar	Pietersburg
Dundee	Port Elizabeth
Durban	Pretoria
Eshowe	Queenstown
Ingwavuma	Rustenburg
Johannesburg	Tzaneen
Keimoes-Upington	Umtata
Kimberley	Umzimkulu
Klerksdorp	Witbank



OUR DIOCESE IN THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH