

## LESSON 14: Miracles




### AIM

To help the children develop an understanding of the term miracle (3.2.7)


### OUTCOME

Learners show a balanced understanding of experiences described as miraculous.

### WHAT YOU NEED

- \*  "The Story of a Caterpillar" (1) ⇨
- \* Dictionaries (3)
- \* Bibles (7)

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 The term miracle is often misunderstood by people. It is therefore important that children have a clearer idea of what is meant by miracle. Read to them "**The Story of a Caterpillar**".  ⇨ After they have been given a moment to think of the story, ask them if they can imagine how the moth felt at discovering that she had turned into this especially beautiful creature. For the moth, this change is a mystery. She, most probably, cannot explain or understand how it happened. What matters to her now is that she is free, flying high in the sky. We can call this a miracle of nature.
- 2 Ask the children **what they know about miracles**. Jot some of their answers down on the board. (They'll probably talk about Jesus' miracles.) Invite them to say what they think a miracle is. Try to see that they do not confuse *miracle* with *magic*. If that is the case, explain that magic is a trick made by a skilled artist or performer. They make you see something that has not happened in reality. Magic is an illusion, or make-believe, like pulling a dove or a rabbit out of a hat. The animal is real, what is not clear is how the animal was brought there. That is where the skill of the artist's trick lies.
- 3 **Miracle:** Look in the dictionary for the definition of the word miracle. Some definitions you may come across:
  - It is a wonderful act done by God's power that saves a person from what seems to be a hopeless situation.
  - A miracle is something in which a person sees God at work.
  - A miracle is a wonderful act done by God to show his love. This act is usually something that is beyond the power of human beings or nature.
- 4 **Experience:** Ask the children if they know or have heard of such miraculous actions of God among the people we live with or who are around us. Point out that we cannot explain miracles, but we can see them happening.

Share with them stories of miracles that you may know or have heard about. Otherwise tell them to ask their parents or grandparents about it.

We see in films or read books about stories of miraculous cures, physical and spiritual. Sometimes amazing things happen that bring about a total change in a person. An incident or event can cause a person to change a harmful behaviour, and this can be called a *miracle*.

- 5 **Prayer and Miracles:** Emphasise that God answers people's pleas or requests for a miracle in a way that he knows is best. Often people get angry with God because of

something they asked him for, and they did not get the answer they expected. They think that God does not care for them. Miracles are mysteries, we don't know God's mind. We don't know why some people experience a miracle and some people don't. But we know that God is a God of compassion and love. He knows what is best for us, even though we may not see it at the time.

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## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 6 **Write a story:** Ask the children to describe in a paragraph or short story the most amazing experience of their own lives. Leave them free to suggest their own title.
- 7 Read a **miracle story** from the Old Testament. Some suggestions from the Second Book of Kings which contains a number of wonders accomplished by the prophet Elisha:
  - the multiplication of the oil [2Kings 4:1-7]
  - the raising of the Shunamite woman's son [2Kings 4:8-37]
  - the poisonous stew [2Kings 4:38-41]
  - the multiplication of the loaves and vegetables [2Kings 4:42-44]
  - the cure of Naaman's leprosy [2Kings 5:1-20]

## TO REMEMBER

A miracle is an event beyond human explanation, which shows God acting in the world.

## The Story of a Caterpillar

She pushed her way out of the egg. She was tiny and pale. As she grew, she became ungainly and fat. She dragged herself along on stumpy legs. She thought she was the ugliest creature in the whole wide world. All the other insects seemed to dislike caterpillars, she thought.

As she walked on looking for a soft place by a tree - for she wanted to spin herself into a hiding place - another caterpillar dragged himself on. He looked puffed and hot. She remembered the other caterpillars she saw on her way to the tree. There were some green ones with eye-shaped circles painted on their bodies. Some were multicoloured, green and yellow, while others had on them a fuzz of soft hair. They also experienced ill treatment from the other insects, and thought themselves ugly.

Slowly and painfully, the stubby caterpillar climbed up the tree. She thought to herself, 'One can't always be treated like that, there has to be something more. I believe there must be!'

Eventually she found a soft spot, way up the tree. When she came across a beetle family, the children, as they watched her, said: "Why is she so ugly? She has so many legs! She's far too fat!" She thought that the way they treated her was really cruel. She finally came to the spot she'd been looking for. She spun and spun, until her home was warm and safe. She curled up and went to sleep. While she slept many changes happened.

After many weeks, the little caterpillar woke up. She found herself surrounded by a warm soft cocoon. She pushed and pushed until the side of the cocoon broke open, and she pulled herself out. She landed near a pool of water and looked at the reflection of a beautiful moth and thought how beautiful that moth was, with wings of gold and silver! She sighed, 'Oh, how I wish I looked like that!' and she began to cry. She lifted a foot to wipe her tears. 'What is this?' she thought. A beautiful silver-gold wing moved in front of her eyes! 'Is it I...?' She looked again at the reflection on the water. 'Yes! I have turned into a beautiful silver-gold moth!'

When they saw this moth the insects crawling about exclaimed: "Look at that moth! Oh! Oh! Oh! How beautiful she is. Where did she come from?"

The ugliest caterpillar in the world had turned into the finest moth ever. She spread her wings and flew high in the sky.

(Adapted from: Trina Paulus. *Hope for the Flowers*. Paulist Press.1972)

## LESSON 15: Jesus, the Compassionate Healer



### AIM

To help the children understand that healing comes out of Jesus' compassion and people's faith in him (3.2.7, 8.4.8)

### WHAT YOU NEED

- \* Bibles (4)
- \* Bibles (5)
- \* 🎵 *Lay Your Hands* (6)

### OUTCOME

Learners understand the power of healing in the ministry of Jesus.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Point out that when **something gets broken**, like a bicycle or any other toy, we can repair it, replace it or we simply learn to do without it. With people it is different. A broken bone (physical hurt) or a broken heart (spiritual hurt or emotional hurt) needs a long and sometimes painful process to heal.
- 2 Invite the children to **recall stories from the Bible**, where Jesus heals and forgives. Make a list on the board and next to each write down the kind of healing that took place. (Don't make too big a distinction between physical and spiritual healing. Help the learners to look more deeply. Physical healing is often a sign of an inner and invisible healing taking place.)
- 3 Explain in your own words: Jesus challenges us to have compassion in our relationships. The Gospels show **Christ as compassionate** to us, he reveals to us a God who is all compassion. The word compassion means: to suffer with, to feel for and with others. Jesus is shown not only as curing and healing people's lives, but his curing has its centre in his immense compassion and people's belief, their faith in Jesus. Jesus reaches out to heal those who are broken, sick, injured and rejected. Healing comes with a transforming power: healing our hurts, forgiving our sins and opening a new compassionate way of life for us.
- 4 **Bible search:** Write the following passages on the board - [Lk 19:5-10] [Mt 20:29-34] [Jn 5:1-8] [Mk 2:1-12]. Ask the learners to look for them in the Bible. Ask them to:
  - a) Say who and what each miracle of healing is about.
  - b) To choose one of them and draw a picture about it in their workbooks.
  - c) Write a caption of what is important in their eyes about the miracle.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 5 Divide the class into groups and give each group one of the readings below. Their task is to **act out the reading**. They must present it to the rest of the class. Give them a time limit to accommodate all the groups.
 

They must say:

  - a) Was the miracle about physical or spiritual healing or both?
  - b) Did Jesus speak of forgiveness of sin or faith?

## GRADE 5

c) Did the person go to spread the news or follow Jesus thereafter?

- Scripture readings to choose from:
- A centurion's servant [Mt 8:5-13]
- Peter's mother-in-law [Matthew 8: 14-17]
- Two blind men [Matthew 20:29-34]
- A demoniac [Mark 1: 21-28]
- A leper [Mark 1:40-45]
- A paralytic [Mark 2: 1-12]
- Jairus' daughter [Mark 5: 21-24, 35-42]
- A deaf and dumb man [Mark 7: 32-37]
- The widow's son [Luke 7: 11-17]
- A woman with a haemorrhage [Luke 8: 43-48]
- Zacchaeus [Luke 19:1-10]
- A cripple [John 5: 1-9]

6 **Song:** *Lay Your Hands*

## LESSON 16: Reconciliation




### AIM

That the children will learn about the healing power of reconciliation and that we can receive God's forgiveness and healing in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (5.1.11, 5.4.12)

### OUTCOME

Learners show appreciation of their need for reconciliation in their relationships.

### WHAT YOU NEED

- \* Big heart made out of thick paper (2)
- \* Bible (3)
- \* Paper to make cards, one per child (9)
- \* *Be Still and Know that I am God* (10)
- \*  Worksheet (11)(12)

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Discuss Friendship:** Ask the children to think of the people who are their friends and how it feels to experience this friendship. Can friendships be weakened or harmed? What can weaken or even break a friendship? Does it feel like an injury or hurt that needs healing? Let them share their experiences. What happens on these occasions? They might talk about the experience of being reconciled.
- 2 **Experience:** Ask them to sit quietly. Take out the large heart you prepared. Hold it high for them to see and tear it in half. Give the halves to the children and ask them to tear off a small piece each and to keep the piece they tore in a safe place.

Write on the board:

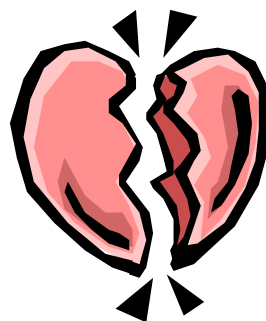
BROKENNESS/ALONENESS

Point out that sin brings brokenness and division.

Draw on the board:



LOVE



SIN

- 3 Explain that **sinful actions weaken or break apart our relationship**, not only with God but with those around us. Ask them if they can remember the story of the 'Prodigal Son' [Luke 15:11-32]. Who is the father, and who is the son represented in the story? (God and us. Remember there are two sons in the story!)

What in the story tells us about:

- the father’s desire for reconciliation?
  - The younger son’s change of heart/repentance?
  - the joy and celebration at the son’s return?
  - the elder son’s hardness of heart?
- 4 **Our need for healing:** Sin separates us from one another and causes us to want to hide from God [Genesis 3:7, 10]. We wish we could undo what we’ve done but we don’t know how. We feel afraid and alone. (The son feels lost, afraid and alone.)
  - 5 **Hurt and healing:** They are part of everyone’s life. When we see that others are hurt and cannot reach out, we hurt too. We’d like them to be healed and comforted right away. The desire for healing is from God. It is a gift that helps us understand how God reaches out to us when we are hurt, in trouble or in pain. (The father’s desire for reconciliation)
  - 6 **God’s love heals:** We sin when we act against God’s love. Sin is knowing how much God loves us but ignoring this and doing wrong. Such is God’s love that God is always ready to heal and comfort the sinner. (The father waits, longing for his son to come back.)
  - 7 **Reconciliation and healing:** The desire for reconciliation is from God. It is God’s desire to heal us if we only turn back to him (The son sets off on his journey back home. “Father I have sinned against you, I no longer deserve to be your son.”)
  - 8 Jesus heals in the **sacrament of Reconciliation.** Jesus said, “There is great joy in heaven when a sinner returns to God.” [Luke 15:7] Each time we celebrate reconciliation we experience the healing power of Christ. Through this healing power we are joined to him and one another in peace and love. (Joy and celebration of the father at his son’s return home.)
  - 9 Give each child a piece of paper to fold and make it into a card, entitle it: **Healing Touch.** Ask them to think about something they did that caused brokenness/division at home, or at school. Ask them to think of a way to bring healing, to make things right again. They write it on the piece broken off the heart and stick it on the card. On the opposite side they can write a prayer to Jesus thanking him for his healing.
  - 10 Conclude the lesson by singing or reading prayerfully as a litany, the words of **the hymn:** *Be Still and Know that I am God.*

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 11 **Examination of conscience**  ⇒
- 12 **Reconciliation Celebration**  ⇒

# Forgiveness and Healing

## AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

When I make choices, do I sometimes forget to think first about what God wants me to do?

1. Have I used God's name in a bad way?
2. Have I forgotten God on Sunday?
3. Have I disobeyed those who take care of me?
4. Have I looked after myself properly?
5. Have I hurt someone by what I said or did?
6. Have I taken things that don't belong to me?
7. Have I always told the truth?
8. Have I been unfair to others?
9. Have I refused to help people who are in need?

## FORGIVENESS AND HEALING

### A PRAYER SERVICE OF FORGIVENESS

(Adapted from *Coming to God's Life*, 1988, New York: Sadlier)

#### OPENING HYMN

*Be Still and Know I am with You*

#### THEME

We praise and thank God for the love and forgiveness that is always offered to us.

#### GREETING

**Leader** Jesus brings us God's forgiveness. May the peace and mercy of Jesus be with you.

**All** And also with you

**Leader** Jesus, we have come to celebrate God's forgiveness. Hear us as we ask you for your forgiveness and peace.

**All** Amen.

#### FIRST READING

God is always ready to forgive us. A reading from the Book of Joel [2:13]

Let your broken heart show your sorrow; tearing your clothes is not enough. Come back to the Lord your God. God is kind and full of mercy. God is patient and keeps a promise; God is always ready to forgive and not punish.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**Leader** Teach me Lord what you want me to do, and I will obey you faithfully.

**All** Great is your love for us, O God.

**Leader** You, O Lord, are a merciful and loving God, always patient, always kind, and faithful. Turn to me and have mercy on me.

**All** Great is your love for us, O God.

#### GOSPEL

The class may act out the gospel story of the prodigal son, or several readers can take the different parts.

#### EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

A learner reads the examination of conscience above. After each question is read, the reader pauses for a quiet reflection.

#### LITANY

**Leader** Jesus, forgive us our sins.

**All** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Leader** Jesus, help us to love one another.

**All** Lord, have mercy on us.

**Leader** Jesus, give us the will to turn away from sin and change our lives.

**All** Lord, forgive us our sins.

**Leader** Jesus, free us from our sins and lead us to the freedom enjoyed by your children.

**All** (Pray the Our Father together).

#### A PRAYER OF PRAISE

[Psalm 136:1-9 or Psalm 145:1-9]

#### SIGN OF PEACE

#### CLOSING HYMN

*In Moments Like These* or *Jesus, Jesus*

## RECONCILIATION AND FORGIVENESS CELEBRATIONS IN OTHER RELIGIONS

### Jewish

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year starts a ten-day period of repentance when people remember and are sorry for the sins they have committed during the year. The period ends on the festival of Yom Kippur.

### Muslim

On the ninth day of the month of Hajj (Pilgrimage), Muslims travel to the Plain of Arafat, about 20 km outside Mecca. Here they stand and pray for forgiveness. Muslims who are not on Hajj often fast on this day in support of those who are.



## LESSON 17: What Is Sin?

### AIM


To help learners understand the nature of sin and its effects (11.2.4).

### OUTCOME


Learners consider choices and their consequences on relationships with self, God and neighbour.



### WHAT YOU NEED

- \*  The Story of Mayimba (1) ⇨
- \* Bible (2)(4)(5)

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 For learners to reflect on **the nature of sin**, read to them the Mayimba story on the worksheet  ⇨. What was Mayimba's sin? Point out the fact that it was due to Mayimba's disobedience that disorder, sickness and death entered their world.
- 2 **Original Sin:** Compare the Genesis story [3: 1-3, 22-24]. Adam and Eve's sin is called original sin. Original means 'in the beginning'. Sin has been with us ever since there were human beings on Earth. As a result of this sin, human beings lost their closeness to God. Original sin damaged humanity, resulting in disorder, discord, disharmony and disease. We then can say that original sin is the natural inclination to do wrong which we inherit as members of the human race.
- 3 **Personal Sin:** It is important to clarify the concept of sin to avoid children confusing it with temptation, mistakes or guilty feelings. Invite the learners to complete and share a sentence beginning, "Sin is..." This will enable you as teacher to become aware of the current thoughts of the learners about the nature of sin. Sin is deliberately turning away from God and others, or choosing to do what we know is against God's Law of Love. In other words we sin when:
  - We know that what we are doing is wrong, unloving and harmful.
  - We do it freely: no one forces us to do it.
  - We do it on purpose.
 Explain that sin is never just between God and us alone. Since sin affects the people around us it is about them too.
- 4 **The Effects of Sin:** Sin changes us, affects us and our relationship with God. Emphasise that even though we sin, God does not stop loving us. God's love for us does not change. 'God hates the sin but loves the sinner'. God takes away our sin and guilt, forgives us and restores us to his friendship. We may stop loving, but God never does. Invite the learners to read, or you might tell them, the following two stories: Judas - [Matthew 27:1-10] and Peter [Matthew 26:69-75]. What is the difference between Judas and Peter? Both betrayed Jesus, but, whereas Judas despaired, Peter repented.
- 5 **Temptation:** Explain that temptations are not sins. When we feel like doing something wrong out of anger, or resentment, or greed, or hate, but we choose not to do it, then we have not given into temptation, therefore we have not sinned. It is good for the learners to realise that even Jesus was tempted. [See Matthew 4:1-11] Ask the learners what they think Judas' and Peter's temptations were. What could Peter and Judas have chosen to do instead?

- 6 **Mistakes:** We sometimes harm or hurt others or ourselves without meaning to. For an action to be sinful there has to be a conscious decision to harm.

Point out that when this happens we nevertheless need to apologise for the mistake we made and set it right with the person concerned.

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## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 7 **Social Sin:** These are harmful actions committed by groups of people against other people. When a group treats another group unjustly because of their religion, race, age or sex it becomes a social sin. Examples are Hitler's Holocaust, apartheid in South Africa, and genocides in Africa and the Balkan states. So too are businesses underpaying their workers, or people being refused their rights because of race, or language, or belief.
- 8 **Cosmic Sin:** These are harmful actions of humanity against the environment and the well-being of the world such as:
- Destroying the ozone layer by the excess of harmful gasses used.
  - Destruction of the rain forests which are the lungs of the earth.
  - Dumping of waste produced by nuclear reactors which, if not properly disposed of, becomes a health hazard through radiation, and leakage into rivers and the atmosphere.
- Discuss the importance of this matter. As future parents and leaders it is their responsibility to look after the well-being of the world their children will inherit.
- 9 Ask the children to find out about other cases of social and/or cosmic sin today or from the past. Where and by who were they committed? Ask them to bring cuttings **from local newspapers**.
- 10 Explain that our **sins affect our relationship with God**. Sins can be named according to their seriousness: Venial sin is any thought, word or action that harms in some way our relationship with God. Mortal sin is an action that destroys or kills our relationship with God.

# The Story of Mayimba

Leza made the first man and the first woman, Mulonga and Mwinambuzhi. Afterwards he called the bird, Mayimba. He gave Mayimba three pots. The pots were tightly closed. Leza said: “Take these three pots to Mulonga and Mwinambuzhi. But do not open them on the road. Tell Mulonga that he can open the first and second pots. They hold seeds. Pot number three must not be opened until I, Leza, arrive.”

On the way Mayimba could not control himself. He wanted to know what was in the pots. He opened the first: it had seeds. He opened the second: it had more seeds. Then he opened the third pot. In this pot were sickness, death and all kinds of dangerous animals and snakes. They all came out of the pot and ran away. Mayimba could not catch them. Then Leza appeared and said to Mayimba: “You have been wrong. You have opened the pot and all those bad things have got away.” Mayimba was very much afraid and flew away into the bush. He no longer lives among men.

Leza said to Mulonga and Mwinambuzhi: “Mayimba was very wrong. I told him not to open the pots, but he did not do what I said. He has brought you much trouble, death, sickness and danger from lions, leopards and snakes. These cannot be caught now, so you must build houses and fences to protect yourselves.” So because Mayimba did not do what Leza said, we are afraid of sickness, death and wild animals and snakes.

**An African Creation Story** (52 Stories. J. Henze (ed), Mission Press,.Ndola 1982)

## LESSON 18: Cheating

### AIM



To help learners understand the harmfulness of cheating and its consequences (11.2.8)

### OUTCOME

Learners consider choices and their consequences on relationships with self, God and neighbour.



### WHAT YOU NEED

- \*  The Emperor's Choice story (2) ⇒
- \* Bible (6)
- \*  Copies of the worksheet (7) ⇒

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1 The effect **other people's actions** have on us. Discuss the following:

- Do you like it when someone lies to you?
- How do you feel when people break a promise?
- How do you react when people 'play tricks' on you?
- Do you approve of people covering up their faults?
- Do you feel comfortable when you know someone cheats at exams?
- Do you feel safe with a person who isn't always truthful?

Allow a few learners to respond.

2 Read the story of *The Emperor's Choice*.  ⇒ Give the learners some time to comment on it.

3 Ask the learners to say what **cheating** means and ask them the following questions:

- Why do you think people cheat?
- What happens when they are found out?
- Do we trust people who cheat?

Jot their answers on the board. Invite the children to look at the reasons why people cheat:

- Not wanting to get into trouble (fear)
- Not wanting people to get mad at them (fear).
- Wanting others to see them as 'good guys' (image).
- To get what they want no matter what (greed).
- To make excuses for their behaviour.

4 All our actions have **consequences**. Discuss the effects of cheating on people. We often see people cheating or being dishonest

- in their relationships (husband/wife, parent/ child, friend/friend)
- in the work situation
- at school or even cheating themselves.

Ask the learners to give examples of the above situations.



5 The other side of cheating is **honesty**. Learners offer definitions. Complement what they offer with one of your own choice. Here are some to help you:

- Honesty is to stand for what is right, to have the courage to be truthful.
- Honesty is to use or treat what has been entrusted to us properly, respectfully.
- Honesty means that there are no contradictions or discrepancies in our words, thoughts or actions.
- Honesty inspires the trust and faith of others in us. With honesty there is no hypocrisy. It is being clean in our thoughts and in our hearts.

Invite the children to share how it feels when we act with honesty.

- 6 The **story of Zacchaeus** [Luke 19:1-10] is a good illustration of what cheating does to a person, and it also shows the decision to change, to 'cleanse' oneself and make things right again. Read the passage and tell it in your own words. Point out the consequences of Zacchaeus actions. Firstly, there were the negative effect his cheating had on the people around him - rejection and isolation. Secondly, his choosing to make up for what he did brought peace and reconciliation to his life. Emphasise the courage he had needed to own up and correct his actions and the joy he experienced with his change of heart.

Invite the children to recall their responses earlier in the lesson and compare how we feel when others cheat us with the effect of our own cheating. Is it worth the time and effort? Do we really get any better by cheating?

- 7 Gather the children around the prayer corner. Light the candle if you keep one there. End the lesson with the **prayer** you will find on the worksheet.  

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## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 8 Ask learners, for the next couple of days, to look in the newspapers or on the news on radio and television for **articles on dishonesty** in private companies, government department, schools, and so forth. They should take note of what the issue is and what has been done or is being done about it. Can they do anything about it? They present their cases to the rest of the class and debate the issues and suggest solutions.
- 9 Divide the class into groups and ask them to make up a **skit** portraying stories of honesty and dishonesty or cheating.

# The Emperor's Choice

Long ago in China, lived a boy named Ping who loved flowers and could grow anything as if by magic! The emperor of the kingdom was very old and he needed to find a successor to the throne. He needed someone who would also love flowers as much as he did. The emperor used to look after his own garden himself and took care of it every day. So he decided that flowers would help him choose the right person. The next day he decreed that the one who raised the most beautiful flowers that year would become his successor. He proclaimed: "All boys and girls throughout the kingdom must come to the palace to receive special seeds from the Emperor."

Ping, who had always wanted to see the palace and the Emperor, went straight away. He was overwhelmed by all the beauty of the place and most especially by the Emperor's garden. He received his seeds from the Emperor himself, who looked so gentle, noble and elegant!. He said to all the people gathered there: "The child who can grow the most beautiful flowers with these seeds, in a year's time, will be the one who will succeed me to the throne."

Ping went right to work. He planted the seeds and tended them. But all year nothing grew. At the end of the year children from everywhere went back to the palace with their pots full of the most beautiful flowers. Ping took his empty pot and went to the palace. He sat sadly alone with his empty pot.

The Emperor was glad to see all the children gathered in the great hall. All with their pots proudly displaying their flowers, hoping to be chosen. The Emperor frowned at the flower bearing children but smiled as Ping shyly showed him his empty pot.

"Your majesty" said Ping, "I planted the seeds you gave me, looked after them with tender care, watered it, but the seeds didn't sprout. I tried improving the soil, changing them to better pots but to no avail - they just did not sprout" To Ping's surprise the Emperor announced him as his successor.

He told the people that the seeds he had given out had been cooked and could not possibly have grown into flowers. Only Ping had been honest. He told Ping that he admired the great courage and honesty Ping had to appear before him and tell him the truth and he gave Ping his entire kingdom.

(author unknown)

## PRAYER

I do not ask you, Lord  
to do my work for me,  
or think my thoughts for me.  
But help me, Lord, to do the things  
I find hard to do myself  
with courage and determination.

## LESSON 19: Anointing of the Sick

### AIM

To help children understand that in this sacrament, the Anointing of the Sick, the seriously ill or elderly person receives God's peace, forgiveness and strength. (5.1.11)

### OUTCOME

The learner understands the power of healing in the ministry of Jesus and its sacramental expression in the Church



### WHAT YOU NEED

- \* Oil for anointing (almond oil or any other aromatic oil) (1)
- \* Bible (4)
- \* 🎵 *Lay Your Hands Gently upon Us* (7)
- \* A copy of the rite (8)
- \* Cards (11)

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Go around the class and **anoint the left hand** of each learner. Help them experience what oil does to their skin. Ask them to rub their hands together to enhance the oil's aroma. To experience the healing and comfort we get from the special feeling that soothing oil gives.
- 2 **Experience of sickness:** Ask the learners to think about a time when they, or someone close to them, was really sick. Who helped you and brought you comfort? Did you feel like praying to God? (Prayer can be comforting as it helps us remember that we are not alone. Jesus is near and wants us to be healthy and strong.)
- 3 **Explain in your own words.** Sickness and pain sometimes lead people into a crisis of faith. They despair and the first question that comes up is, "Why does God let this happen to me?" For some people, it becomes a time to look at themselves, and turn to God for help and strength.
- 4 **Jesus' Love and Compassion:** Ask the learners if they can remember some of the healing stories from previous lessons. Let them share what was relevant in these stories and then let them listen to the following short Scripture extract [Luke 4:40]:  

"All those who had friends suffering from diseases of one kind or another, brought them to Jesus, and laying his hands on each of them, he cured them".
- 5 Jesus healed the sick in love and compassion. This healing power he shared with the apostles, and sent them to heal and anoint the sick. The apostles and those who came after them - priests and ministers today - continue to lay hands on the sick, and to anoint, reconcile and heal them.

The church, through **the ministry of the sick**, teaches us the constant rebirth to new life in Christ, she brings God's healing love to those in need.

The church follows Jesus' teachings and example. We help Jesus in his healing work. For that reason, most parishes have formed a group of trained people who serve others in the Ministry of the Sick. Elderly, bedridden, housebound, seriously sick and dying people are given communion and accompanied in prayer by these ministers on a weekly basis or more often if necessary.

6 **Anointing of the Sick** is one of the Sacraments of Healing. This sacrament is a powerful sign of Jesus' presence that brings strength and healing to those in need. Anointing helps people face their illness with faith and trust. It helps dying people to continue their journey to God in heaven.

7 **Sing:** *Lay Your Hands Gently upon Us.*

8 **Celebrating the Sacrament**

Go through the celebration together with the learners. Better still have a priest or deacon demonstrate the sacrament for the class. The anointing of the sick normally takes place in the hospital or at home. It sometimes takes place during Mass, after the Liturgy of the Word. Wherever it is celebrated, it helps comfort the family and friends of the sick person. The two most important signs of this sacrament are the laying of hands and the anointing with oil.

- The priest lays his hands on the head of the sick person as a sign of God's blessing.
- He then anoints his/her forehead saying: "Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy, help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit".
- He anoints the person's hands saying: "May the Lord who frees you from sin, save you and raise you up".
- The priest prays that Jesus will ease their suffering and restore them to health.
- All present recite the Our Father together.

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## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

9 **Ministering to the sick:** If it is possible, invite the parish priest to speak to the learners about the Sacrament of the Sick. He could share his experiences of physical healing, when people's strength's regained after the administration of the sacrament.

10 Invite a person in the parish who ministers to the sick, to come and **share their experiences** and talk about his/her experiences of helping and comforting people who are housebound, bedridden through illness.

11 **Making Get-well Cards**

It is important to provide opportunities for children to show their care and concern towards those who are sick and housebound or in hospital. Find out if there is a teacher, parent or child from your school in this condition who will enjoy receiving letters from the children. Make them see that a note, card, or letter makes their day a little brighter, it makes them feel more loved. Remember that they must be suffering not only from pain but also from loneliness. Encourage them to illustrate their cards or letters with bright and cheerful colours. If the whole class makes a card each, try to mail them or deliver them all together in one big envelope.

12 Let the learners **dramatise** the celebration of the sacrament.