

CARING FOR THOSE IN NEED

GRADES 1-3 – Lesson 2

GOAL: Students will be encouraged to explore the meaning of poverty here in the United States as well as around the world. What does poverty look like? Why is help for the poor central to Jesus' message?

Lesson:

Students will explore what is meant by poverty. They will see how Jesus wants them to treat those who are poor with dignity, care, generosity, and love. They will discuss what poverty looks like in the world around them (physical and spiritual). As Mother Teresa says, people can be just as hungry for love as they are for bread. Students will learn how to love God and their neighbor through the parable of the Good Samaritan and how they can be a Good Samaritan for others.

Bible Story:

Watch the story of [The Good Samaritan](#)

Discussion:

Through the story of the good Samaritan, we see how important it is to care for those who are poor and helpless. Jesus says that we are to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our strength and with all our minds; and our neighbors as ourselves. The Samaritan showed love to God and to his neighbor by helping the wounded man. Why? Because God wants to help each of us and He wants us to help each other too.

- How was the wounded man shown love and mercy?
- How do you think the wounded man felt when he was shown love and mercy?
- How do you think the wounded man felt when the priest and the Levite passed him by?
- What would have happened if nobody helped the wounded man?
- Who is our neighbor? How can we love our neighbor as ourselves?
- Have you ever been like the Good Samaritan in the story? What did that feel like?

In today's world we don't see many people wounded on the road but what other kinds of poverty do we see?

- Can you be a Good Samaritan to someone who doesn't have any friends?
- Can you be a Good Samaritan to someone who doesn't know Jesus?
- Can you be a Good Samaritan to someone who doesn't have a snack?

Watch:

- [Fly Away Home](#)

Discussion:

- Lead a discussion with students about what it might be like not to have a home. Of the necessities in life, what does the boy in the story have? Any? How do you think he must feel? What would you do if you knew someone who didn't have a home to live in? What gave the little boy hope?

Activity:

Materials: Blue construction paper, red construction paper, four bowls, cheerios, M&Ms, raisins, hard candies or mints, small paper cups, masking tape.

How many children in America today are living in poverty? According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2018, an estimated 11.9 million children were living in poverty – 16.2 percent of all children, or one out of every six in the United States. To illustrate the number of children living in poverty, have your group count off by five. Individuals numbered 1 through 5 receive a blue card. Those numbered 6 receive a red card.

Prepare a table at the front of the room with four bowls of food, containing Cheerios, M&Ms, raisins, hard candies, or mints, and a stack of small paper cups. Individuals with a blue card are then invited to come to the food table and are allowed to take a cup and fill it with cereal, candy, and raisins, all the way to the top, if they desire. Individuals with a red card are then invited to the food table but are told they may only choose the Cheerios – and may only fill their cups halfway. (You might ask your group members to pin or tape the card to their clothing so they can empathize with the notion that others know you are poor, like when children have to present their free lunch cards in the cafeteria, announcing their poverty to their peers.)

Once the distribution is made, the individuals with the blue cards are then advised that they may share any of their food with those holding a red card.

Discussion:

- How did it feel to be the one in six with the red card?
- How did it feel to stand at the table spread with food but be allowed to only choose one item – and a lesser amount than available to the others?
- For the blue card group, what was your initial reaction when told you could share your food with the others?
- For the red card group, how did it feel to have someone share with you?

Prayer:

*Heavenly Father,
You have given us so many good things.
You have given us our family, our friends, our home, our school, good food, and nice clothes.
We pray for our brothers and sisters who do not have these things.
Help us to love them and to find ways to help and serve them.
Amen*

Lesson adapted from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Life, Justice and Peace