

LESSON 4

THE FACES OF EASTER III

FOCUS: JESUS' BAPTISM AND BLESSING BY GOD

- **LITURGICAL ACTION**
- **CORE PRESENTATION**

THE MATERIAL

- **LOCATION: EASTER SHELVES**
- **PIECES: SEVEN PLAQUES ILLUSTRATED WITH FACES OF CHRIST, WITH RACK**
- **UNDERLAY: PURPLE AND WHITE**

BACKGROUND

Lent is the season when we prepare for Easter. This lesson continues to help children prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories of Christ's journey toward the cross and resurrection. This week's presentation focuses on the face of Christ as the One who was baptized and blessed.

You begin this week's presentation by presenting a summary of the first two plaques, the Face of "Jesus' Birth and Growth" (pp. 32-36) and the Face of "Jesus Is Lost and Found" (pp. 37-41). Begin with those two presentations before adding the third plaque and its story.

NOTES ON THE MATERIAL

Find the materials for this presentation in the middle of the top shelf of the Easter shelves, in between the material for the Mystery of Easter, and the Synagogue and the Upper Room.

The material consists of a set of seven faces of Christ, mounted on wood or card-stock plaques. The underlay is a purple and white "scroll" that unrolls to show six purple rectangles and one white rectangle. Roll up the underlay so that the white rectangle is hidden inside.

A special carrier rack for the Faces plaques stands them up, making them visible to a child scanning the room full of materials. This stand for the plaques also holds the rolled-up underlay. (See the illustration on p. 33.) If you do not use this stand, put the rolled-up underlay and plaques in a tray.

SPECIAL NOTES

At Home: The Faces of Easter also work well as a presentation for family storytelling around the table during Lent. Instead of inviting listeners to bring other materials to the story, finish by asking special wondering questions. For example, for these first three presentations, you could ask:

- I wonder if there was anyone here who was ever born?
- I wonder if anyone around this table was every lost? Found?
- I wonder if there is anyone in this family who was baptized?

This kind of storytelling gathers the family and its stories within the context of the Master Story of the Christian People.

MOVEMENTS

WORDS

When the children are ready, go to the Easter shelves and bring the plaques and rolled-up underlay to the circle.

Put the cards at your side and place the underlay in front of you. Unroll the underlay toward you to uncover the rectangle for the first plaque. Tell in summary the story "Jesus' Birth and Growth" (pp. 32-36). When you are finished, lay down the first plaque.

Unroll the underlay to uncover the rectangle for the second plaque. Tell in summary the story "Jesus Is Lost and Found" (pp. 37-41). When you are finished, lay down the second plaque.

Unroll the underlay to uncover the third rectangle. Pick up the third plaque and hold it so that the children can see it as you tell this story:

Point to John. All you can see is his hair.

Cover Jesus' face with one of your hands. Remove your hand. Trace the outline of the dove at the top of the plaque.

Watch carefully where I go so you will always know where to find this lesson.

Jesus grew and became a man. When he was about thirty years old, he went to the River Jordan, where his cousin, John, was baptizing people.

Do you see John? You can just see the back of his head. He was a wild man!

Jesus waded into the river until he was face to face with John. He said, "Baptize me."

John looked at Jesus as if for the first time. Now he saw who he really was. "How can I baptize you? You are the Messiah, the one we have been waiting for. You must baptize me."

"No. It is written that you will come before me and prepare the way. Baptize me."

Jesus went down into the darkness and chaos of the water. When John lifted him back up into the light, there were people there who said they saw a dove come down from heaven and come close to him.

MOVEMENTS

Put the third plaque down on the third rectangle of the underlay, with the face of Jesus toward the children.

Begin to go around the circle, asking each child if he or she would like to bring something to put by the plaque illustrating "Jesus' Baptism and Blessing by God." Some children may not be able to think of anything, so move on, coming back to them later. If they are still stuck, that is okay. Many children learn by watching as well as by doing.

Enjoy the items that the children bring. When you have had time to enjoy the entire layout, invite children, one at a time, to return their materials. Then take the plaques and underlay back to the Easter shelves.

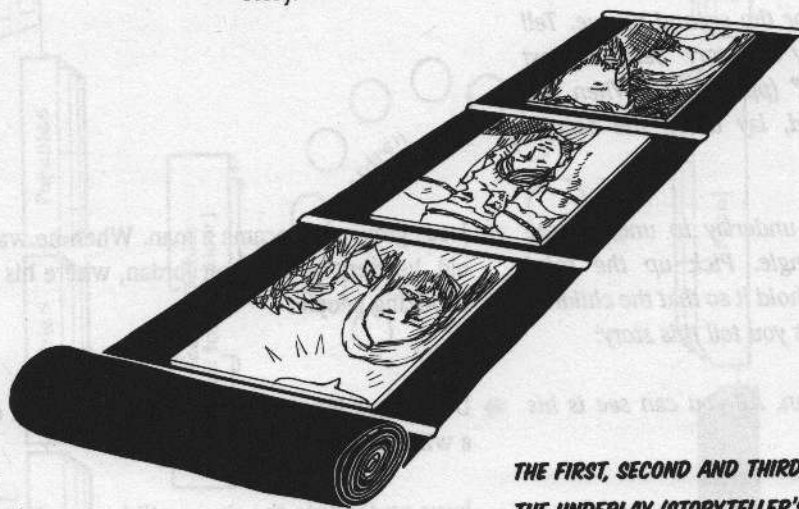
Help the children choose their work.

WORDS

There were also people there that day who heard a voice. The voice said, "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased."

After Jesus was baptized, he went on across the River Jordan into the desert. He stayed there for forty days and forty nights to learn more about who he was and what his work was going to be.

Now I wonder what there is in this room that can help us tell more of the story. Look around and see if you see something. I will go around the circle and invite each one of you to go and get something to put by the picture to help us show more of the story.



THE FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PLAQUES ON THE UNDERLAY (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)