

Second Sunday after Epiphany

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

Explore

—1 Corinthians 12:7 NRSV

What's Your Name?

newsprint, markers

Introduce yourself by a new name. Give each student a new name to use during class. Use names such as Wise One, Knower, Faith, Healer, Talker, Translator, Miracle Maker, Disseminator, Prophet, Perceiver...

Ask the class to list names that people are called on a daily basis. Categorize the names: good, bad, affirming, hurtful. Discuss what students feel when people call them by some of these names.

What's in a Name?

Jesus had many different names. Divide the class into groups or pairs. Search the scriptures and hymnals to discover the variety of names and phrases describing Jesus. Compile everyone's information on newsprint. What are the most frequently used names? Discuss the connotations each name brings with it. Determine the five favorites of the class. Ask students to draw an image representing Jesus and give their picture a name.

What Did Jesus Do?

The coming of Jesus brought radical changes to the world. He was born in a region that, at that time, was considered the world's crossroads for merchant trade and was a mixture of different races and cultures. People from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East came together. What did Jesus think about this interaction? He walked among all kinds of people and respected them. He walked with them. He served among the people healing and bringing hope; he was open to all in need. He valued old people, lepers, small children, women, fishermen, a dying thief, a rich young man, a beggar, a cripple, and a Samaritan. His message was about righteousness, wholeness, and a sense of worthiness. He changed lives.

Jesus brought giftedness, honor, and respect to all people. His purpose centered on the good of all humankind. All his gifts were given for the achievement of that purpose. His coming deepened social consciousness. He modeled what we might become. He elevated the role of women, honored children, changed the conduct of the world, brought a new reverence for human life, found a better way to live, and upheld the dignity of all humans.

Extract

Bible, paper, markers, tape

1 Corinthians
12:1–11

Different but Equal

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1–11. Make a desk card for each gift of the Spirit found in the scripture by folding a piece of 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper into fourths. Write the names of each gift on one side. Divide the desk cards among small groups. Challenge each group to define their "gifts" by acting them out for other groups. Develop a phrase definition that can be chanted as they perform their "gifts." Repeat the performance with everyone in class joining the chant. Now place the desk cards around the room. Have students stand beside a card that represents a gift of the Spirit they believe they have or have seen in someone else. How is that gift shared?

Spiritual gifts from God are "inner qualities" that bring about God's desires for us. The Holy Spirit that comes from God bridges all time, all space, and communicates in whatever way they will receive it. Discuss the following questions.

paper, pens

- Where do spiritual gifts come from?
- How are the gifts received?
- Are the gifts of one person the same as another?
- What is the reason the spiritual gifts are given?
- What would the results be if God had not given spiritual gifts to us?
- Does it take wisdom to love your neighbor? knowledge to respect a person? faith to understand another?
- What would be the “common good” of all these gifts?

Spiritual gifts are positive and intend to give blessings to all people. They affect relationships and the support of one another. They are a display of God’s power and love.

Experience

God’s Investment in Us

As individuals, God makes an investment in everyone of us by giving us spiritual gifts and expecting us to use them with love. Today’s world needs to see evidence of God’s love. We are relational beings. We have two hands—one to hold on to God and one to reach out to our fellow humans. Do we live so God’s power can flow through us to others? Do we accept the giftedness, the worth of others enough to share God’s intentions for us? List these words on separate sheets of paper and post them around the room: invite, hug, pray, respect, write, inform, forgive, befriend, speak, love, honor, study, learn, help, mingle, organize. Give each student a marker. Ask them to circle the room, writing on the pages ways they can share their gifts to seek the common good of all people.

large sheets of paper,
markers, tape

Micah 6:8
John 13:34, 35
1 John 4:21
Doctrine and
Covenants 151:9
Doctrine and
Covenants
156:9b, 11
Doctrine and
Covenants 161

God Provides the Directions

See what these scriptures say about diversity and seeking the common good. Have students find partners and explore the following: Micah 6:8; John 13:34, 35; 1 John 4:21; Doctrine and Covenants 151:9; Doctrine and Covenants 156:9b, 11; and Doctrine and Covenants 161. Collect important phrases. Make a class list of those phrases when partner groups share.

Expand

Taking the Name of Christ

When people choose baptism, they take on the name of Christ. After reading Doctrine and Covenants 161:6, respond on the paper provided. What does it mean to you to become “a global family united in the name of the Christ”?

Doctrine and
Covenants, paper,
pens