

Grade 2

Introduction to Salvation History

Note to catechist: see Salvation History Overview in Introduction

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will introduce students to one another and to the theme of their book, *Jesus Our Life*. God the Father loves us unconditionally, and He has a plan for us to be one with Him in Heaven one day. God tells us the love story between Himself and each of us in the Bible. God makes a covenant of love with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. This covenant is fulfilled through Jesus Christ, his Church, and the Sacraments. Each of us is invited to come to know and love Jesus, Who will lead us to his heavenly home, especially as we prepare for First Penance and First Holy Communion.

AIMS

- Students will be introduced to one another and to the theme of this year.
- Students will know that God loves them and has a plan for them to be in Heaven one day.
- Students will begin to see themselves as a part of God's love story as found in the Bible.
- Students will learn that they must open their hearts to Jesus.

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (5–10 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE: Student Text, p. 101 (bottom)

“I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and they know me. They hear my voice. I know them and they know me.”

Jesus is our Shepherd Who will lead us to Heaven.

SACRED ART: Student Text cover

The painting shows Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd because He finds the lost sheep, feeds them, protects them, and leads them home. We are the sheep of Jesus' flock. A good shepherd protects his flock from dangers. Jesus is the Way to Heaven.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Psalm 23

“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

Welcome (15–20 minutes)

- Welcome students to their second grade class. Introduce yourself and give the children a description of your life: your family, your interests, and your pets.
- Optional ice breaker: Play a Skittles game. Sit in a circle. Pass around a bowl of Skittles and tell each child to pick out three, making sure that the three colors are different. Tell the students that for each color of Skittle they have, they are to tell something about themselves: red—something

MATERIALS

- Bible
- White board and markers
- Grade 2 Student Text, *Jesus Our Life*
- Skittles (see Welcome Activity)
- Handout for the door hanger project; crayons and/or markers; cardstock or foam and scissors (see Focus 3 Optional Activity)

WORDS TO KNOW

salvation history: the story of God's plan to save each of us from the consequences of sin. Salvation history began with Creation and will continue to the end of time. Each of us is a part of this love story in our own lives. As the story unfolds, God's love and mercy become evident through His Son, Jesus Christ; the Church; and grace received in the Sacraments.

personal about themselves (where they live; what grade they're in); yellow—something about their family (number of siblings; what their mom or dad does for a living); orange—favorite TV show; green—something about school (favorite subject; awards and accomplishments); and purple—something about their hobbies.

- Hold up the Student Text, *Jesus Our Life*.
 - *Who do you see in the picture on the cover? (Jesus.)*
 - *What is Jesus doing? (He is a shepherd, guiding His sheep.)*
 - A shepherd leads sheep and keeps them safe. Jesus is the Good Shepherd Who leads His sheep. We are the sheep. Jesus keeps us safe and leads us to Heaven.
- **Tell students the following:** This is a very special year because you will be receiving Jesus in your First Holy Communion. During this year, you will learn how to welcome Jesus into your hearts. At the end of class, you will make something to remind yourself that Jesus is always knocking on the door of your heart.

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

God has a plan that each of us will be with Him in Heaven. Each of us is invited to come to know and love Jesus, Who will lead us to His heavenly home.

Lesson Explanation (30–45 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

Focus 1: God has a plan for each of us. God's plan is for us to be with Him in Heaven one day. The Sacraments will help us get to Heaven.

- God loves each of us very much; He has plans for us to be happy forever. God has a plan that one day we will be with Him in His home in Heaven.
 - *How do you think we get to Heaven? Can we buy a ticket to get there? (No.)*
 - *Can we get to Heaven by ourselves? (No; Jesus helps us to get to Heaven, and He gives us others to guide us along the way.)*
 - No matter who we are, we still need Jesus' help; we cannot get to Heaven by ourselves.
- Let's think about all of the things God gave us to help us get to Heaven:
 - *Who did God give us to help us get to Heaven? (Jesus, our parents, brothers and sisters, guardian angel, and others.)*

FOCUS 3 OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

- Door hanger project. (See image below.) You may want to use cardstock or foam backing for support.
 - Tell students the following: Today we will decorate a door hanger to put on our bedroom doors. Jesus is always knocking at the door of our hearts. We should answer the door with an open heart. This door hanger will be a reminder to us every day to invite Jesus into our hearts. Every day Jesus waits for us to invite Him into our hearts through our prayers.

- Let's look at God's love story.
 - God created each of us out of love; He wants each of us to be with Him in Heaven. (Point to Creation at the beginning and Heaven at the end of the timeline.)
 - Adam and Eve lived in paradise, where everything was perfect until they disobeyed God. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, the gates of Heaven were closed. (Put an X over Heaven.)
 - Then God made a plan to reopen the gates of Heaven; He promised to send His Son, Jesus, Who would come to reopen the gates of Heaven. (Point to large cross in center of the timeline.)
 - The people waited a long, long time until Jesus came. During this time God made promises to send Jesus, Who would be their Savior. God made a promise to Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. We call these promises "covenants." (On the timeline, between Creation and Jesus Christ, add the following: Covenant Promises: Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.)
 - Two thousand years after Abraham, Jesus finally came to reopen the gates of Heaven. (Erase the X over Heaven.)
- We are also on the timeline (mark a stick figure on the timeline after Jesus Christ). God's plan for us is to get to His home, Heaven, where we will be happy forever.

Conclusion: God's plan to help us get to Heaven is written in the Bible.

Focus 3: In God's great love story, He asks each one of us to allow Jesus into our hearts by opening the door to our hearts.

- God has a plan for each of us to get to His home in Heaven. He gave us so many people and things to help us get there. YOU are a part of God's love story.
- Part of God's plan for our life is that each of us would open the door to our hearts and let Jesus into our hearts.
 - If we invite Jesus into our hearts, He will help us to get to Heaven. Jesus will come to us this year in a very special way in our First Holy Communion.
 - *What should we do in order to have Jesus in our hearts? (We must invite Him into our hearts through prayer.)*

Conclusion: Each of us must invite Jesus into our hearts through prayer each day. If we open the door to our hearts Jesus, will help us get to Heaven.

Review Supplemental Lesson—Introduction to Salvation History

- God has a plan for each of us to be with Him in Heaven.
- God tells us the story of His love for us in the Bible.
- Jesus wants us to open the door of our hearts for Him.

Application (5–10 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- ***What can each of us do to thank God for letting us be a part of His plan?*** (Pray; go to Mass with our parents; be kind and loving.)
- ***How can we invite Jesus into our hearts? What can we say to Jesus?*** (Answers will vary.)
- Pray: Dear Jesus, I invite You into my heart; please come into my heart today. I want to learn to love You so that one day I can be with you in Heaven.
- During this year of preparation for your First Penance and First Holy Communion, you should remember to invite Jesus into your heart. The door hanger on the door to your room will serve as a good reminder.

Celebration (5 minutes)

- Pray in thanksgiving that we are all a part of God's plan: Dear Jesus, thank You for my life and for all of the people and things in my life that will help me to get to Heaven. Thank You for my parents, my family, and my friends. Thank You for my Catholic Faith, for my parish, and for the priests who help guide us to Heaven. Thank You that this year I will be able to receive You into my heart through my First Holy Communion. Amen.

