

K-5

GO FORTH!

LEARNING TO LEAD

Vol 7 No. 4 – Summer 2024 /Easter-Pentecost

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be **introduced** to the concept of leadership found in scripture, prayer, story, and their own experiences. They will **discern** the difference between good leaders and questionable ones. They will **consider** ways they and their families may become leaders, particularly in their church communities.

STEP 1: PRAY

To the teacher: Light a candle and encourage children to take deep breaths and quiet their minds. Then lead them in the prayer.

Jesus, how can I be a peaceful person?

ALL: Show me how, Jesus!

Jesus, how can I give other people hope?

ALL: Show me how, Jesus!

Jesus, how can I help others who are lonely?

ALL: Show me how, Jesus!

Jesus, how can I learn about people who need food and a place to live?

ALL: Show me how, Jesus!

Jesus, if I know something is wrong, how can I tell others?

ALL: Show me how, Jesus!

Jesus, please help me see and understand how you love and care for everyone.

ALL: Amen.

To the teacher:

- At another time, talk about what it means to be peaceful, hopeful, lonely, needy, or wronged.
- Pray this prayer together again; have children choose one of the lines to illustrate with markers or colored pencils.
- Display these illustrations by the prayer table.

STEP 2: MAKE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

MISSION STORY

YANAPANAKUNA

Looking up into the hills, Gabi learned against the fence. One of her family's alpacas inside the fence ambled over to her. Gabi's hands were cold, and she slid her fingers into the



warmth and softness of the animal's fleece.

Gabi was feeling sick. She often did. A doctor had given her medicine, but it did not help. Her parents were worried but they didn't know what else they could do. There were no other doctors nearby and the family had very little money. She sighed. It was so hard to go to school when she felt sick. Other children thought about what work they would do when they were older, but Gabi just hoped she'd get through today.

She rubbed her hands more on the alpaca. It turned and looked at her with big, gentle eyes. Suddenly she heard some voices in the distance. Gabi could see several people walking together. One looked like Father Gregory McPhee from the small church that her family attended once in a while. He came from the United States. He was a long way from home, but he seemed happy here in Bolivia. She wondered about this group, but feeling tired, she went back to her house.

Inside, her mother was working at her loom, creating a many-colored bag she hoped to sell. Her father was knitting. Both of her parents could walk and knit at the same time! They used their alpaca fiber for this work. Gabi had just sat down when there was a knock at the door. Her mother left her loom to answer it. She let a group of people, the ones Gabi had seen earlier. In addition to Father Gregory, there were five other people. Gabi recognized most of them. Why had they come to her home? This had never happened before!

Her parents were a little nervous, but also happy to welcome them. Gabi knew that sometimes people in her village were shy towards outsiders like Father Greg. Today, though, there was lots of friendly talk. They were going from house to house, Father Greg said, to meet everyone. They hoped the people in the village would come together, to help each other with problems such as being depressed, worrying about

money, and angry feelings. Gabi recognized one of the women, called Rosse Mary, who said, "We call this group, 'yanapanakuna.' "Gabi looked up. She knew this Quechua word. Rosse Mary went on, "We feel this name shows what we hope will happen: sharing, working as partners, and in solidarity. That means seeing each other as family, looking out for each other, and working together to make things better. "

Suddenly, Gabi noticed her parents looking at each other. Her father said softly, "We welcome your friendship, and we ask for your help. Our daughter is sick, and we are worried."

Things changed for Gabi after that. With the help of the Yanapanakuna group, a different doctor came to see her. He gave her new medicine and other medical help. Gabi began to feel better. She went to school regularly now, and to church too, where she enjoyed praying and singing with friends and other families.

She thought about how the Yanapanakuna group had made a difference for her. Looking around the small church, she began to plan how she too could lead the way to help her friends.

WORDS IN THIS STORY:

A leader is a person that other people listen to; often these listeners choose to do what that leader does.

A leader who wants to do good is someone who: sees problems or sees people who need help and gets others to work on this and someone who helps others see what they are good at and encourages them to do it.

Yanapanakuna: a word from the Quechua language meaning "let us help one another." It is pronounced just as it appears. This includes:

- **sharing with others**
- **working as partners** to reach out to others, including them, and also working on problems together
- **solidarity**, the idea that all people are one family, so we must look out for each other and work together.

Using any words from the definitions above, make an acrostic poem. Three examples have been done for you. Add as many lines as you want.

solidarity

A

N

A

P

A

N

A

wor**K**together

U

N

sh**A**ring

STEP 3: EXPLORE SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

Read the following:

Old Testament: Jeremiah 1:1-9

God told Jeremiah that before Jeremiah was even conceived, long before he was born, God knew him! And God had decided that Jeremiah would become a great prophet. But Jeremiah was still young when God told him this. "I don't know how to do this! I'm not old enough!" Jeremiah protested. But God answered, "Don't think you are too young. I will send you to people and help you know what to say. Don't be scared, for I am always with you." Then God reached out and touched Jeremiah's mouth, saying, "I have put my words into your mouth."

Life of Jesus: Luke 22: 24-27

Jesus' **disciples** were arguing with each other. "I am better than you!" one said. "No, I am the better one!" insisted some others. Jesus said that many other people argue about this too, but the disciples should look at this differently. "You should not want to be like those who have power, who seem to be the leaders. It is the people who serve them who are the greatest in God's eyes," Jesus explained. "I am a servant. Be a servant."

Philippians 2:1-11

The great teacher and leader, St. Paul, wrote letters to people who were just learning about Jesus and his wisdom. Paul wrote: Though Jesus is God, he is human too; Jesus never tried to be better than others; he was a servant, a special helper, to others.

St. Paul also advised:

- Some people try to be better than others, and work to have more and better things. Do not do this.

- Look for the good in others.

- Look for ways you can help others.

- Work with other people who can be helpful to those who need help.

PROPHET: A person chosen to speak for God; some prophets become good leaders.

DISCIPLE: A person who greatly admires and listens to a teacher.

SERVANT: Jesus meant a person who does work caring for others, often volunteering to do this. This person is kind, helpful, and loving to others.

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH SAY?

Pope Francis spoke to some young people about being leaders. He said the most important way to become a good leader is to be a servant to others. And a good leader shows love to those he/she leads.

Discuss:

Imagine God is talking with you as God spoke to Jeremiah. Do you think God may be calling you to be a leader and servant?

Together name people you know or have heard about that are the kind of people Jesus spoke of: leaders and servants (or helpers). How do they act? How do they treat others?

STEP 4: TAKE ACTION

Follow the Leader:

A common game to play is "Follow the Leader" where one person leads others in doing silly things like making faces, or jumping around, and the others must do what the leader does. It is a simple game, but it gives us some good questions because a leader in this game can choose to do safe things or unsafe things.

Discuss and if possible, display the answers:

What is an example of what a good leader might do in the “Follow the Leader” game?

What is an example of what a bad leader might do in this game? _____

What is an example of what a good leader might do in school? _____

in the neighborhood? _____

at home? _____

What is an example of what a bad leader might do in school? _____

in the neighborhood? _____

at home? _____

When you are a follower and you think the leader is making bad choices, name two things you can do:

_____ and _____.

Talk about how the class or family can be good leaders.

BE A GLOBAL NEIGHBOR

Support Father Greg’s leadership and work by sharing your resources with the team in Bolivia. [Alpaca Wool Project at Maryknollsociety.org](http://AlpacaWoolProjectatMaryknollsociety.org).

RAISE YOUR VOICE/ ENGAGE YOUR FAMILY

WATCH the video “[Let us Build a World of Peace](#)” created by Maryknoll Lay Missioners. It shows many people in many places, working together—yanapanakuna!

When someone is a helper/leader (or servant leader), their work brings peace. In the video, watch for people whose work as a helper/leader makes a situation peaceful. Name them and discuss things you have seen or done that bring peace.

Then seek out other people, such as grandparents, neighbors, and adult friends, asking them to answer these questions:

1. We need leaders to _____

2. One way I can lead is by _____

Listen to their answers. Ask questions if you are curious. Then share with them how you would answer the above questions.

As a family, discuss three ways you will work to create peace this summer.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

A Story to share and discuss:

St. Francis of Assisi, a Servant/Leader:

Francis was a young man who had everything. But he was

restless. He didn’t know what to do with himself. His father wanted him to work in the family business, but Francis said no, he wasn’t interested. Francis thought it would be cool to become a knight, a kind of soldier. But he quickly got captured in a war and was put into prison. He didn’t like that either!

Back home, he wandered out of his hometown one day. All around him was beautiful scenery, but he barely noticed. He came to a little church called San Damiano (or Saint Damien). The church was a mess. It needed a lot of work to fix it. But in it was a painting of a large crucifix. Francis decided to pray there. As he prayed, he felt as if the image of Jesus on the cross were looking right at him. Francis had lots of different feelings at that moment! But he said, “Show me what you want me to do with my life.” And Francis heard Jesus tell him, “Go and rebuild my church!”

So young Francis thought he finally knew what he should do. He worked hard, patching up holes and painting walls. The little church became nice again. He found another church that needed work, and he fixed that one. He did a third one too.

But as he worked, he began to realize that Jesus wasn’t just talking about church buildings, but about helping people to come together, to help each other, to love each other, to pray together. Because that is Church too! And Francis was even better at that than he was about patching up holes and painting! And so, he began that good work.

As a family, discuss:

· What do you like best about the church building you go to?

· Read the story, YANAPANAKUNA, in Step 2. Gabi’s church was “falling apart”, not because the building was breaking down, but the community, the people who could pray together and help each other, were “falling apart.” How did they work together to fix it?

· How might we as a family work at our church to fix the Church? What things might we do to help others? How can we reach out to others in our Church community?

NEXT ISSUE: CARE OF CREATION. COMING SEPTEMBER 2024

