

GOD THE GOOD SHEPHERD

UNIT TWO: God's Messengers

Lesson 3: God works Miracles!

CONTENT:

1. After the wadi dried up, God sent Elijah to a town where he met a widow and asked her to make him some bread. He told her that God would not let her food get over till the rains came.
2. The widow believed God's promise and obeyed. God worked a miracle: her jar of flour and jug of wine did not get empty. When the widow's son died, Elijah prayed for him and God worked another miracle: the boy's life returned. [CCC2583]
3. Mary also believed in God's power. At a wedding party the wine got over. She told her son what had happened and said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you!" The servants obeyed and Jesus worked a miracle, turning water into wine. [CCC2618]
4. God's word is true and he can work miracles. That is why we believe that when Jesus said, "This is my Body! This is my blood!" the bread and wine really did become Jesus himself. At each Mass, or 'EUCCHARIST' this miracle takes place. [CCC1375]
5. *The stories teach us 2 things:*
 - We must believe in God's word and his power.
 - We must do whatever he tells us to do.

ASSIGNMENT: Read handout at home. Find out about Eucharistic miracles to share at class.

REFERENCES: 1 Kings 17:1-7. Luke 22:19. John 6:51.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts. Materials for magic trick: 2 paper bags of the same size; a few thin silk scarves, ribbons, scissors.

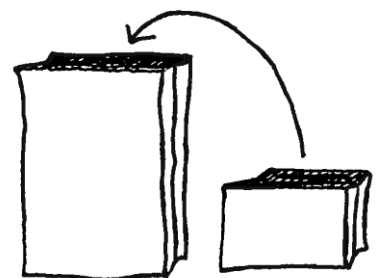
I. STARTER: Magic Trick: Something from Nothing.

[PREPARATION:

1. Cut the top off one paper bag, leaving only 3 inches. Discard the top.
2. Fold the scarves and ribbons and place them flat in the whole bag.
3. Place the cut bag inside the whole bag covering the scarves.

PERFORMANCE:

1. Show the bag to be empty by holding it upside-down and flashing the inside of it towards the audience.
2. Set the bag on a table, put your hand inside and moving the inner bag aside, pull out the scarves and ribbons one by one. Keep talking as you perform. (Instead of the teacher, a student could perform the trick.)]



- We just saw some magic being done, but it was just a trick. We cannot really make something out of nothing. Only one person can do that! Who is that? [God!]

II. DEVELOPMENT:

Elijah was a prophet who found out that God really does work miracles. Today we will hear what happened to him after he left the Wadi Cherith.

Remember that there was no rain at all in the land, so bit by bit the water in the wadi dried up until there was nothing left. Then God said to Elijah, "Go to Zarephath and live there. I have told a widow there to feed you!" (A widow is a woman whose husband has died.)

When Elijah reached the gates of the city he saw a woman gathering sticks. He called out to her and said, "Please bring me some water and a little bread!"

But the woman said, "I have no bread, but only a little flour and a little oil in a jug. I was just collecting sticks to make a little bread for myself and my son. When that is over we will have nothing left and then we will die."

Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go and make the bread and give me some first. After that, make some for yourself and your son. God has promised that your jar and your jug will not get empty until the time when the rains come and there is food for everyone."

The widow believed Elijah. She believed that God would look after her. She emptied out her jar and jug and made some bread for Elijah. Then she and her son ate.

The next morning she looked into the jar... there was still some flour in it, even though she had emptied it! And the jug still had some oil. Once again she emptied it out and cooked bread for Elijah and her son and herself. This went on day after day. Every day there was enough flour and oil to make bread for the day. How happy the widow was that she had obeyed God!

One day the woman's son became ill. He got worse and worse and then he stopped breathing. The woman ran to Elijah crying, "My son is dead!"

Elijah said, "Give me your son!" He carried the boy up to his room and laid him on the bed. Then he prayed, "O Lord my God, let this child's life come back in to him again!"

Suddenly the boy's chest began to go up and down... his body became warm... then he opened his eyes. Elijah took him back to his mother. "See" he said, "your son is alive!"

The woman hugged her son and said, "Now I know that God's word is true!"

- Do you believe that God is powerful? Can God work miracles? Can he make something from nothing? Can he make something into something else? [*Yes, he can!*]

[Give out handouts. Students use a pencil (coloured pencil if possible) to shade the areas containing words from the verse given. Eg. YOU, ARE, THE etc. The 'magical' jug and jar will emerge. They write down the message they see in them: OBEY AND TRUST THE LORD AND HE WILL HELP YOU.]

Home assignment: ✕ Find out and share with the class any miracles that show that the bread and wine at Mass really become Jesus' Body and Blood. (Look up Catholic websites)

NEXT CLASS:

- At our last class we heard about 2 miracles that God worked for the widow. What were they? [*The flour and the oil didn't get over; the woman's son became alive after dying.*]
- Why do you think God worked these miracles for the widow? [*She had believed in God's promise and did what God asked her to do.*]

There was another woman who believed in God and always obeyed him. God is very happy with her and whenever she asks him for anything he does it. He even works miracles! Can you guess whom I'm talking about? [*Mother Mary.*] In fact, the very first miracle that Jesus did was when his mother asked him to help.

Once Mother Mary and Jesus and his friends were invited to a wedding. After the wedding ceremony there was a party of course! Everything was going well until a servant came to the bridegroom and said, "The wine is all finished! And the guests are calling out for more!"

Mary saw how upset the family was. She realised what had happened and wanted to help...and she knew just what to do! (What do you think she did?) She went to Jesus!

She said, "Son, they have no wine!" Then she called the servants and said, "Do whatever he tells you!" She knew that Jesus would do something to help.

The servants went to Jesus and asked him, “What should we do?” Jesus pointed to some water jars which were standing there. He said, “Fill those jars with water.”

Now the water jars were very big ones. Each one could hold about 100 litres of water. And there were 6 of them...so altogether they could hold 600litres. The servants went back and forth from the well filling up the jars... They didn't know why Jesus asked them to do such a thing, but they obeyed. When all the jars were full, Jesus said, “Now fill a cup of it and take it to the chief steward.”

No one wanted to do this job! Each one thought, “If I give the steward water in a cup he might hit me!” But one of them remembered what Mary said, (What did she say?) ‘Do whatever he tells you!’ So he dipped a cup into the water and took it to the steward. Then he took a step back so that he wouldn't get a slap!

But the steward didn't slap him. He took a sip... and then another... and another. He smiled, then he shouted, “Wow! This is the best wine I have ever tasted!” He called out to the bridegroom, “Why did you hide this delicious wine till now?”

The servants ran back and looked into the jars. The water had changed into sparkling red wine! They looked at Mary and she smiled. Her smile seemed to say, “See? I told you to do whatever he tells you!”

This was the first miracle Jesus worked. When his disciples saw what had happened, they realised that Jesus was someone very great and very powerful, not an ordinary man.

[Read the rest of the handout and fill in the missing words: 'DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU']

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- The widow who helped Elijah realised that God's words are true. She saw that God works miracles for those who trust and obey him.
- Mother Mary also believed in Jesus. She knew that he could do anything he wanted, even turn water into wine!
- At the Last Supper what did Jesus say as he picked up the bread? *[This is my Body!]*
- What did he say as he picked up the wine? *[This is my Blood!]*
- Does Jesus speak the truth? So what do you think happened to the bread and wine? *[They really became his Body and Blood.]* Though they looked like and tasted like bread and wine, they were really Jesus himself. The apostles believed Jesus' words. Even after he died and went up to heaven, they kept on having this very special meal and saying Jesus' words. For 2000 years we have been having this meal which we call the Eucharist *[Write EUCHARIST on the blackboard]* or the Mass.

[At this point students who have researched Eucharistic miracles could share them. The teacher could keep one or two ready. Eg. The Host at Lanciano, Italy. Google 'Eucharistic Miracles' for many well authenticated miracles.]

- Do you believe that the bread or the host really becomes Jesus' body? Do you believe that Jesus really is present in the church? Close your eyes for a few minutes and talk to Jesus about it. Tell him you believe and thank him for this precious gift.

[Students pray in silence for a few minutes.]

Home assignment: × Read handout at home. × Learn the Bible verse.
