

MISSION AWARENESS LESSON PLAN (Religion Curriculum)

(Younger grades)

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA: A SAINT FOR ALL TIMES

Goal: To provide students with formal education related to the missionary nature of the Church by sharing the life of a positive role model, a traditional saint (Religion Outcomes #3, #4)

Materials needed: this lesson plan and accompanying story of St. Anthony, map of the world, and any necessary materials for follow-up work.

Objectives: (Subject areas in the curriculum where the objectives could be addressed are indicated in parentheses.)

1. To introduce a special missionary: St. Anthony of Padua (see attached brief biography)-telling as much of, or parts of, the story that you feel will interest the children at your grade level (religion)
2. To assist the children to understand that God, God's spirit, is active in our lives, just as God was in St. Anthony's life (religion)
3. To assist children in developing the understanding that God's people are called to reach out to one another and help them as Jesus did-that is, to be missionaries (religion)
4. To present (in the context of the story) some simple geographical concepts (social studies)
5. To help children develop listening skills (language arts)
6. To expand children's vocabulary, as appropriate: **habit, ordain, monastery, martyr, preach, missionary, justice, advocate, debtor, alms** (religion, language arts)

Procedure:

1. Prepare the children to listen to a story (have map posted or globe available).
2. Tell the story of St. Anthony (elaborate/abbreviate as appropriate).
3. Use the follow-up questions (below).
4. Prayer: Ask God to help me see that changes that happen to me, my family, my school, my country can help me learn to have faith and trust in God.
5. Present some follow-up activity; there are two suggestions below.

Follow-up questions:

1. St. Anthony is the saint some people pray to when they lose things. This is because once upon a time he had a book of prayers that was very important to him. A young man left the seminary and took Anthony's book with him. Anthony prayed and the young man returned with the book. Have you ever lost something important? Did you pray to St. Anthony?
2. St. Anthony followed Jesus by traveling to another country and telling people there about Jesus. How can you follow Jesus without even traveling?
3. St. Anthony found out that he had some gifts he didn't even know he had? What were these? What gifts/talents do you have? What are you good at?

Follow-up activities:

1. Illustrate your favorite part of the story; OR draw three parts of the story in sequence.
2. Take a trip to the church to see if there is a statue of St. Anthony. (*Statues of St. Anthony often present him in the Franciscan habit, holding a bible with the Child Jesus sitting on the bible, and with a lily in his other hand.*)

MISSION AWARENESS LESSON PLAN (Religion Curriculum)

(Older grades)

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA: A SAINT FOR ALL TIMES

Goal: To provide students with formal education related to the missionary nature of the Church by sharing the life of a positive role model, a traditional saint (Religion Outcomes #3, #4)

Materials needed: this lesson plan and accompanying story of St Anthony, map of the world, and any necessary materials for follow-up work

Objectives: (Subject areas in die curriculum where the objectives could be addressed are indicated in parentheses.)

1. To develop students' understanding that the Spirit calls and sends all Christians to service in a particular way (religion)
2. To develop the students' concept of a missionary as: one who reverences the dignity of all people, who cooperates in spreading the reign of God by telling others about Jesus, and who lives like Jesus. (So we are all missionaries.) (religion)
3. To assist students to learn about a saint whose life was what every Christian's life is meant to be-a steady courage to face the ups and downs of life, the call to love and forgive, to be concerned for the needs of others, to deal with crises great and small, and to totally rely on God. (religion)
4. To encourage sharing information-e.g., by re-telling the story of St. Anthony to younger children and to expand vocabulary to terms such as: **habit, ordain, monastery, martyr, preach, missionary, justice, advocate, debtor, alms** (religion, language arts)
5. To review geographical knowledge and historical concepts: Portugal, Morocco, Muslims, Mediterranean Sea, Sicily, Padua, France (social studies)

Procedure:

1. Introduce the life of St. Anthony in a manner appropriate to the grade level-i.e., the teacher can read the story, or a group of students can prepare the story for the rest of the class.
2. Use follow-up questions (suggestions below)
3. Prayer in honor of St. Anthony; this saint is patron of lost articles, helper in troubles, healer of bodies and spirits, patron of lovers and marriage, and of mariners and those who live in mountainous areas. Students can compose their own prayers.
4. Present an appropriate follow-up activity (there are a few suggestions below).

Follow-up questions:

1. In the story of St. Anthony you heard about five Franciscans who were martyred-i.e, killed because of their religion. Do you think this happens nowadays? (e.g., Oscar Romero, etc.)
2. People stood in line to hear St. Anthony preach. Would you stand in line to hear someone talk about God? What *would* you stand in line for?
3. St. Anthony "joined a religious order." Do you know anyone who has done this?
4. St. Anthony's plans were changed many times. How were they changed? When have you had to change your plans? Is an unexpected change always a bad thing? Why or why not?

Follow-up activities:

1. St. Anthony of Padua has more cities and places named after him than any other saint-sixty-eight (54 in Latin America; 15 in the United States, 4 in Canada and the Philippines, and one in Spain. There are also four capes, three bays, two reefs and two peaks with his name). Do you know or can you find any? (Atlas work)
2. Many customs and devotions are associated with Anthony of Padua. In Italy, there is a fund that is used for the poor. The fund is called St. Anthony's Bread. With what other customs or devotions to St. Anthony are you familiar? (written assignment)
3. As a Franciscan friar, Anthony was very poor, and he had a great love for the poor. How have you shown love for the poor, the lonely, and the elderly in the last few months-personally or as a class/school? (written assignment)
4. Trace the journeys of St. Anthony on a map of the world. (map, globe)

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

(younger grades begin here)

Imagine a statue of a young man dressed in a brown Franciscan habit, holding an open Bible. A very young child is standing on the Bible, talking to the man. Do you know the saint whom this statue represents? The child is Jesus and the man is Anthony of Padua.

(older grades begin here)

This is the story of St. Anthony of Padua, but-- he was not always called Anthony and he was not always from Padua. When he was born his parents named him Fernando. He was born in Lisbon in Portugal about 800 years ago (*show Portugal on the map*). His family, the Bulhom family, was very wealthy and powerful. Yet when he was only 15 years old, Fernando decided to leave his family and enter the religious order of St. Augustine and by the time he was 25 years old he was **ordained** a priest. Then one day something happened that really changed Fernando's life. (*As you continue to listen to this story notice that over and over again God called Anthony to change his plan for his life.*)

One day Fernando joined a crowd of people in the streets of the town of Coimbra where he lived in the **monastery**. The people were there for a sad reason. Five Franciscan missionary priests who had been sent to preach to the Muslims in Morocco (*see map*) had been **martyred** and their bodies were being brought back to their **monastery** in Portugal to be buried. As Fernando listened to the heroic stories of these men, God called him to join the Franciscans and give his life for Christ **preaching** the Gospel to the Muslims. That is to say, he wanted to be a **missionary**.

Although it was not an easy decision, the Augustinians finally allowed him to leave that monastery and become a Franciscan. As a Franciscan friar, he took the name of Anthony. He went by ship to Morocco to teach about Jesus and become a martyr himself BUT, there was another change of plans for Anthony. As soon as he arrived in Morocco he became so ill that he was in bed for many weeks and he was so sick that he had to return home to Portugal. BUT, he never arrived. ANOTHER change of plans. His ship was in storms and high winds and was blown across the Mediterranean Sea to the coast of Sicily (*show on map*)-a thousand miles to the east.

The Franciscans in Sicily didn't know Anthony but they welcomed him and nursed him back to health. (Missionaries often nurse people back to health.) After a few months, he made his way to Italy, where the Franciscan priests and brothers were holding an important meeting. Anthony went to the meeting and met St. Francis of Assisi there. While Anthony was in Italy, something else happened that made a change in his life. He went to an **ordination** and, at the celebration after it, he was unexpectedly asked to give a talk. He did; and he did such a good job that the friars were amazed. From that day on his reputation as an inspired preacher spread through Italy and France. His quiet life was soon exchanged for that of a public preacher. He traveled "on mission" through southern France and northern Italy for the next nine years preaching about Jesus. He was so good that people "camped out" to get a chance to hear him. Between 1228 and 1231 (about three years) Anthony made about 400 trips to preach.

He was a preacher of **justice**, an **advocate** for the poor. He talked against **unjust interest rates**, and interceded for debtors. He challenged people to give **alms** to the poor. He really understood the problems of the people. He was like Jesus because he chose objects of nature for his **sermons**: the lilies of the field, the nest of birds, the web of the spider.

Padua, Italy, is a short distance west of Venice. Anthony spent time preaching and writing there. It was near there that he died on June 13, 1231; June 13 is his feast day. He was only 36 years old. When he died the children of Padua ran through the streets calling out, "The Saint has died!"

Words printed in **bold type** are words that may need special explanation, depending on grade level.