

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. Help us always to believe in Him, so that we can have eternal life with You. Send your Holy Spirit to the children and parents who live in Central and South America. Work through the pastors, missionaries and Bible storybooks to give them lasting faith in You, so that one day, we may all be together with You in heaven. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Please keep in your classroom prayers:

- the LHF translator, Luz, who is translating the English edition of *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories* into the Spanish language.
- Lutheran missionaries in Central and South America who are working to share the Gospel in the Spanish-speaking neighborhoods and communities around them.
- all the children who have adopted this "Juan 3:16" mission project, that the Holy Spirit would work powerfully through their gifts and offerings to bring Spanish-speaking kids around the world to faith in Jesus.
- children in Central and South America who are still waiting to hear the Good News, that God would keep them healthy and safe and soon bring them to faith in Jesus.

Sing:

- "God Loved the World So That He Gave" (Lutheran Service Book #571)
- "Amigos de Cristo" (All God's People Sing! #64)
- "Lift High the Cross" (Lutheran Service Book #837)

The LSB includes the Spanish translation. Try singing the refrain in Spanish!



Classroom Devotion

Just One

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish
but have eternal life. John 3:16*

Can you remember a time when you had one of something – just one – and it was something important to you?

Maybe you had only one dollar, and a friend asked you if she could have it. Or maybe you had a favorite toy or video game, and one day it was gone. Sometimes people lose things that can never be replaced, like a wedding ring or an old photo of someone they love. It can be really hard to give up something that important to us.

The Bible tells us that God our Father had only one Son. And yet God gave up His only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. Why? Why would God give up something so important to Him?

The answer is right there, in John 3:16. God loved the world – He loved it SO MUCH! – that He gave His only Son. His love for you and for me is so great that He was willing to let Jesus die to take away our sin, so that one day, we can have eternal life with Him in heaven. **God loved us more than He loved Himself.**

Did you notice something about the beginning of that verse? It says that God so loved the world. So He doesn't just love you and me; He also loves people in places like China, Russia, Great Britain and Africa, and He loves people who speak languages like French, Swahili and Spanish. But there are so many people around the world who have never heard this Good News.

One place where kids are just waiting to hear about Jesus is a city called Lima, in Peru (a country in South America). Caitlin Worden, a Lutheran deaconess, works at what's called a mercy house – a place poor people can come to when they're hungry, need a place to rest, or need help. Lots of kids show up at Castillo Fuerte mercy house, because their parents work all day and they don't have anywhere else to go.

While Caitlin and the other missionaries are helping the kids learn to read and keeping them safe, the most important thing they want to give the children is the Good News about Jesus! Most of the kids don't know anything about the Bible, but the Holy Spirit is working through us to change that! With our mission offerings, kids from Castillo Fuerte in Peru (and from about 20 other Spanish-speaking countries) will get a free Bible storybook, written in their own language.

And remember earlier when we thought about how important something is when you only have one? For most of these kids, this is the only book they own. In its pages, they will be able to read, again and again, how God made the world and sent His only Son, Jesus, to save them from their sins.

Isn't it amazing how God uses His children in one part of the world – here in the United States – to tell children 4,000 miles away about His one and only Son, Jesus? God loves these Spanish-speaking children in Central and South America, and God loves you.

Porque de tal manera amó Dios al mundo, que ha dado a su Hijo unigénito, para que todo aquel que en él cree no se pierda, sino que tenga vida eterna. Juan 3: 16