Different Gifts, But the Same Spirit

INTRODUCTION

This lesson shows us that all people have gifts to share, and when persons with disabilities have the opportunity to share these gifts with others, the entire classroom and the entire parish benefit.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS LESSON

Students will:

- see the giftedness of all people;

- include students of all abilites

- use people-first language;

- experience how people with disabilities are able to accomplish a task; and

- be familiar with 1 Cor. 12:4-11 as the basis for inclusive prayer.

PREPARE YOURSELF

Read 1 Cor. 12:4-11, the scriptural basis for this lesson. Find out any special needs or challenges that your students may have by consulting with your catechetical leader. Think about your own experiences with disability.

PREPARE MATERIALS

- prayer table

- craft supplies for making greeting cards and bookmarks

- materials for gift wrap simulation exercise (see third activity in the student lesson)

- materials for gift boxes (see prayer service)

TEACHING HINTS

Suggested time line
(based on a 75-minute class)

Introduction, Life Experience, Sharing	*15 Min.*
Faith and Scripture	*30 Min.*
Activities (choose one or two)	*20 Min.*
Prayer Service	*10 Min.*

1. **Life Experience:** Ask students to read the story aloud, or read it to them. Be sure to allow enough time for full answers to the questions at the end of the story.

2. **Faith and Scripture:** Read the Faith and Scripture section with your class. Ask students about their personal experiences with those who are differently-abled – in school, on sports teams, in the neighborhood, perhaps at home.

Be sensitive to all answers and remember that children often laugh when they aren't comfortable discussing certain topics.

- o Emphasize the inclusive love of Jesus. He saw unique gifts in each person.

- o Share examples from your personal life about how inclusion has made a positive difference. Point out that we all have disabilities such as color blindness, forgetfulness, weak eyesight, etc.

- o Discuss methods of inclusion listed in the student lesson. Ask children to suggest additional methods, and make a list of these on the chalkboard.

- o Ask the children to write the "Beatitude of Acceptance" from page two of the student lesson on a piece of paper, decorate it and use it as a bookmark for their Bible.

3. **Activities:** Choose the one or two suggested activities from page three of the student lesson that will be most helpful to your class. (The gift wrap exercise will take the longest because you will want every child to have a chance to participate.) Hints: The word search could be used as a review for the next class, and the greeting card could be assigned as homework.

4. **Prayer Service:** Prepare gift boxes for each student or make one large box. Glue mirrors in the bottom of small boxes. Wrap the boxes and the lids separately so that the lids can be lifted off. Display the gift boxes on the prayer table throughout the class.

Make sure to allow enough time for the prayer service so students do not feel rushed or pressured at the end of class.

Teacher: "Let us pray that all of our gifts can reflect the healing love of Jesus in our lives."

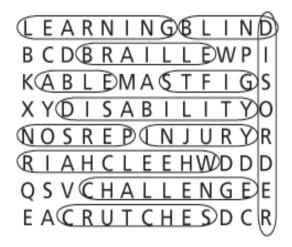**Students:** (read aloud 1 Cor. 12:4-11)

Teacher: (place one large box in the center of the prayer group or pass out individual gift boxes)

"Inside this box is a special gift. When you open the box, please take a moment to thank God for the gift you find inside."

Students: (open individual boxes or one student is selected to open the large box, students take turns looking inside the large box or look in the individual boxes to see themselves reflected in mirrors inside)

Teacher: "Now we will pray for the gifts we are and can be to others." (allow time for student prayers)

Solution to Word Search

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L E A R N I N G B L I N D
B C D B R A I L L E W P I
K A B L E M A S T F I G S
X Y D I S A B I L I T Y O
N O S R E P I N J U R Y R
R I A H C L E E H W D D D
Q S V C H A L L E N G E E
E A C R U T C H E S D C R
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