



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, ABC, Primary - RCLB Lectionary



### Primary Session

John 3:13-17

#### Opening Prayer

Let us Pray,  
Loving God,

You want us to live with you forever. Because you love us so much, you sent Jesus to die for us. From his death on the cross and his rising up to you, he freed us from our sins. Someday we will rise up to you, too. Thank you for loving us so much. Help us live obediently on earth. Let us share your love with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

#### Opening Life Activity

Draw a picture that shows Jesus rising to heaven. Now include yourself in the picture.

- Where are you in the picture? Are you rising or still on the ground?
- Where will you be in the future? What does this mean for you?

Share your pictures and ideas with others.



#### Listening to God's Word

See how much God loves us. To be sure we would live forever with God, God sent his Son, Jesus, to suffer and die on the cross. Jesus then rose and went back to God in heaven.

Read John 3:13-17

Allow for Silence

#### Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does it mean that Jesus was triumphant over the cross?
- What does Jesus promise us in this scripture?
- How will we be glorified like Jesus? Why is this possible?

#### Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the gospel using the Catechist Background section.

John reminds his listeners of an Old Testament reading where God asked Moses to lift up a snake before the Israelites. The people complained and lost faith. Poisonous snakes came biting and killing. The people saw how powerful God was and repented. The raised serpent was a symbol of God's healing power. John connects this to the raising up of God's Son. In order to heal and save us from our sinfulness, Jesus had to die on the cross and then be



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raised up from his death. Triumphant over the cross and death, Jesus returned to God in glory. Jesus' cross, like the serpent of his ancestors, becomes a symbol of God's unfailing love for all believers. It reminds us that God's love for us is so great that he sent his only Son to die for us.

### **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- Why is the cross such an important symbol for us today?
- How does God's great love for us affect what we say and do?
- How would you explain the importance of the cross to someone who has never heard of Jesus?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

### **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

#### **Redemption**

At the time Jesus was crucified on the cross, crucifixion was the worst kind of execution. It was a method saved for the worst kind of criminal. It was a humiliating way to die. Before his execution, people of Jesus' day would never have used a cross as a symbol of triumphant victory. And yet, that is just what the cross is for us. Jesus died for us. Through his earthly mission, his death on the cross, and his rising to rejoin God in heaven, Jesus saved us from our sinfulness so that we could return to God triumphantly in glory. Jesus freed us from the slavery of our sins to the fullness of eternal life. He accepted his mission, his suffering and dying out of love and obedience to God. We are called to love and obey as well. When we look on the cross, we are reminded of what Jesus did for us and assured of God's love.

- How did Jesus' death change the way people viewed the cross?
- Can you think of other ways God saved people before he gave his Son?
- Why do you think the words "John 3:16" make popular bumper stickers?

### **Sacrament Connection**

#### **Reconciliation**

Without the help of Jesus, indeed the very gift of his life, we could not be free from our sins. Because of this redeeming act, we are brought into a right relationship with God. However, it is our responsibility to continue in that relationship. By participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we strive to live in a way that is pleasing to God. In the sacrament, we acknowledge what we have done that is hurtful. We tell God that we are truly sorry for our actions and promise to try not to hurt ourselves or others again. Through the priest, God forgives us for our sins. Even though we try not to sin, we know we will fail from time to time. That is why we can receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation repeatedly.

### **The Gospel in Life**

Look around your home, your parish, and your community. Where do you see crosses? What

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do they mean in the locations where you find them? Make the sign of the cross whenever you pass one and promise God that you will try to not only obey his commands, but in whatever way you can will carry on the mission Jesus began.

