Preschool–Grade 6

Mary Anoints Jesus

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: I can give Jesus my best.
Bible passage: John 12. Read John 12:1–8 yourself before class.
Memory verse: "the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." *John 12:3 (KJV)*. **Odour** means smell; **ointment** is a sweet-smelling oil.
You need: a Bible, one small paper cup with ground cinnamon in it, covered with a paper towel, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at John 12. Fill and cover the cinnamon cup.

1. Opening game: Sniff, Sniff! (5 minutes)

Kids sit in a circle. Say, "Close your eyes!" Hold the cup under each child's nose and lift the paper towel. Each child takes a big sniff and says, "Mmm!" Then show them the cinnamon. Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a sweet smell that filled a whole house."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to John 12. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

Jesus came to visit His friends (John 12:1). *(Wave hello.)*
They made Jesus a supper (12:2). *(Pretend to eat.)*
Martha served the food (12:2). *(Hold out a pretend plate.)*
Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus (12:2). *(Sit up tall.)*
Mary had a sweet-smelling oil. It cost a lot (12:3). *(Hold your hands like a bowl.)*
Mary poured it on Jesus' feet (12:3). *(Pour slowly.)*
She wiped His feet with her hair (12:3). *(Wipe gently.)*
The whole house smelled sweet (12:3). *(Take a big sniff: "Mmm!")*
Jesus said, "Let her alone" (12:7). *(Smile and nod.)*
Mary gave Jesus her very best. *(Hands on your heart.)*
Say it with me: "I can give Jesus my best!"

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3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who came to visit? *(Jesus, John 12:1)*
2. What did Mary pour on Jesus' feet? *(A sweet-smelling oil, ointment, 12:3)*
3. What did the whole house smell like? *(The sweet ointment, 12:3)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "The Bible says, 'the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.' That means the whole house smelled sweet." Teach the motion: draw a big roof in the air over your head, then take a big sniff. Say the verse with the motion three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "John 12:3" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: A Gift for Jesus (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw something good they can give Jesus: a song, a prayer, a hug for a friend, a helping hand. While they color, ask: "What did Mary give Jesus? What can you give Jesus?" Let anyone who wants to take one more sniff of the cinnamon cup.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, Jesus, for loving me.
I give You my best. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving, and let every child sniff on "The whole house smelled sweet." If they get wiggly, act out the supper again. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

Left out on purpose: Judas complained about the cost and wanted the money (John 12:4–6). That part is not told to preschoolers. If a child asks, say, "Someone grumbled, but Jesus said, 'Let her alone.' He did not let anyone stop Mary's gift."

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