

Second Sunday after Epiphany

For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

—I Corinthians 6:20 NRSV

Explore

Rejection and Affirmation

paper, pencils or pens

Distribute a piece of paper and pencil or pen to each student. Ask them to draw a simple table as follows:

Affirmation of My Worth

Rejection of my Worth

Invite the students to think of a time they felt loved and affirmed as a person of great worth. Think of the person who made them feel that way and when it happened. The person might have been a teacher, parent, friend, or camp staff member. The occasion might have been at school, home, or camp. Ask them to recall the occasion and to think about the feelings they experienced as they were affirmed or loved. Write down these feelings. When everyone is finished, take a few moments to allow the students to tell a part of the experience they feel comfortable sharing. As the teacher, gently affirm each person's worth as they tell their story. *As the facilitator of the class, always be aware of the sensitive nature of the activity. Keep a safe, comfortable environment. Do not expect everyone to share, and be prepared to have other stories available if students do not feel comfortable participating.*

Extract

Bible, poster board/
paper, markers

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Read Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18 together, taking turns reading each verse. Here “fearfully” means to be in awe of or to honor with great respect. Then focus the students on one or two verses that really speak to them personally. Have them copy one verse or part of a verse for their room or school locker. Invite them to share with one another why the verse speaks to them. Then have students restate the verse of another student in new words. Ask the following questions:

Psalm 139:1–6,
13–18

1. What is the message of the passage?
2. What is God saying to you personally through this scripture?

Using the verse they previously selected, allow the students time to create posters that illustrate the importance of the verse to them.

Experience

Bible

Nathanael and Stereotyping

John 1:43–51

As you read together John 1:43–51, ask about Nathanael's thoughts about the people who came from Nazareth. Did Nathanael have a high opinion of people who came from there?

Visualize mental pictures of people representing the following nationalities:

French	Italian	Australian	German	Afghani
Nigerian	Japanese	Saudi	Israeli	Chinese
Mexican	Palestinian	Greek	Korean	Russian
American	Canadian	Kenyan	Egyptian	British

When we see individuals from a particular group all in the same way, it is called stereotyping. Often the picture created in our mind is not a good one. Often it is dehumanizing. Often it is prejudicial—prejudging in a way that is diminishing of the worth of unique individuals. Is this the case with your mental pictures. Ask: Have you been the object of stereotyping? Discuss the experiences. paper, pens

Our Call

Our call is to recognize that all humans are fearfully and wonderfully made. A loving God uniquely and wonderfully makes each human. What can be done to change a person's thinking? On the paper provided allow the student to journal their thoughts on this question.

Expand

Known by Our Spirit: The Spirit of Christ

The Community of Christ is an international movement. There are members present in over fifty countries worldwide. The sun never sets on church members as the earth spins in its orbit in the solar system. Within the body of Christ are many races. Among us are many ethnicities, and many different languages are spoken. Since about 1992, more members of the Community of Christ worship outside North America than inside.

Use an inflatable globe (available at teacher supply stores) and the list of countries below to locate each country where the church is present. Look over the list to familiarize the students with it. Then form a circle and make this a game by tossing the globe to another person as the name of the country is called. The student who catches the ball locates the country then tosses the globe to another while calling out a different country. inflatable globe

American Samoa	Dominican Republic	Jamaica	Norway
Argentine	El Salvador	Japan	Papua new Guinea
Aruba	Fiji	Kenya	Peru
Australia	France	Korea	Philippines
Belgium	French Polynesia	Liberia	Russia
Bolivia	Germany	Malawi	South Africa
Brazil	Guam	Mexico	Spain
Bulgaria	Guatemala	Myanmar	Sri Lanka
Chile	Haiti	Nepal	Switzerland
Colombia	Honduras	Netherlands	Ukraine
Canada	Hungary	New Caledonia	Uruguay
Grand Cayman	India	New Zealand	United Kingdom
Denmark	Italy	Nigeria	United States
Democratic Republic of the Congo			Venezuela
Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire)			Zambia
Republic of China (Taiwan)			Zimbabwe

After this game, close the class praying for all God's children—not only those in the church, but in the entire world.

Lectionary scriptures—I Samuel 3:1–20; Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18; I Corinthians 6:12–20; John 1:43–51