

Family Sunday School

Lesson 3 - All Saints Day/Kaitlin Curtice

Introduction: All Christians are sinners but we are also all saints, thanks to the generous mercy of Jesus that washed us clean of our sins. We will continue our series called “Saints and Celebrations” with a celebration of all of the saints, living and dead, on this celebration day. We also honor and try to imitate special saints. These are people who received exceptional grace, were sustained by faith, and whose good works are to be an example to any Christian. This week we will learn about Kaitlin Curtice. Although Kaitlin has not been canonized (recognized as a saint by the Church), she is still someone who can inspire us. We all have the blessing of being inspired and of inspiring others, too.

Start the Fun!

Roll the Film!

Kaitlin Curtice writes, “If you consider yourself an activist, or someone who longs to make right the injustices of the world, whether within or outside the church, watch this show.”

She is referring to Molly of Denali, a PBS cartoon about the effects of assimilation and colonization of Indigenous people, told sweetly by a young Alaskan native girl. Here is a clip from the episode “Grandpa’s Drum,” that helps us better understand today’s lesson.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdB02HoK04s&t=119s>



Read together

A Story About Kaitlin Curtice



If you've ever read stories or seen movies with Native American people in them, you might wonder, "Where are all the Native American people now?" Did you know they are still here, still among us? The reason you may not recognize them is that a long time ago, when White Europeans came to the "New World," and took the land from the native, or Indigenous, people living there, they made them give up their culture. The White people made the native people speak English, wear clothes like theirs and change their religion. Changing yourself to fit in with a bigger, stronger group is called assimilation.

This week's saint, Kaitlin Curtice, wants to help Native Americans relearn their old culture and figure out how they can be Christians, too. She also wants to help White people make things fair for Native Americans. Kaitlin is a Potawatomi Indian. She was born on Potawatomi land in Shawnee, Oklahoma, but she did not grow up learning anything about her Native American culture. When she was young, she went to a Baptist church and a public school, but as she got older she became curious about her Potawatomi heritage. One day while hiking along Sweetwater Creek near her home in Atlanta, Georgia, Kaitlin felt God impressing on her that she was a Potawatomi woman. She says she already knew that with her head, but God was making sure she knew it with her heart. After that, she started learning about her people's origin story, their history, their language and their religion and she started teaching it all to her two sons.

Kaitlin also wants to help the Christian church understand how Native Americans feel so we can respond to their problems in loving ways. It is hard to look back on mistakes we have made, but Kaitlin knows we need to face our problems in order to solve them. She has written books and prayers and has a blog. There, you can learn about team mascots like the Redskins and the Chiefs, ecological issues like climate change, and how COVID-19 has affected indigenous people.

When Kaitlin says "good morning" in her native language, she says, "mno waben," pronounced "minnow-wah-bin." This translates to "It is good when things become visible in the light." It is good when people shine light on other people for us so that we can see them and appreciate them as Jesus would want us to do.

Discuss:

Ask: Why do you think it might be hard for Native Americans to be Christians?

Discuss: If they are trying to honor their old culture, they might be practicing their original religion, which would be different from Christianity. Also, they might be angry that Christians used to use the Bible as an excuse for taking over their ancestors' religion and other parts of their culture. Once we know these issues, though, we can be better at helping and understanding.

Ask: We will not be able to turn back time and right the wrongs done to indigenous people. What are some ways we can help them?

Discuss:

Support Indigenous Communities

We can give donations to organizations like NAHA (Native American Heritage Association) <https://www.naha-inc.org/>

If you have never visited a native reservation, it is difficult to understand the actual reality of what the lives of modern native people are like. Take the time to visit a reservation and volunteer there – there are many ways that you can contribute such as teaching, doing medical work or doing manual labor. There are many volunteer opportunities. Connect with a volunteer program.

Buy Native products. Whenever you purchase an artwork, a handmade piece of clothing or another product created by an indigenous person, you are not only supporting the native economy but also preserving the culture. Check out this list by Beyond Buckskin.

Talk about Native American life and issues, rather than avoiding the topic.

Simply sharing stories and talking about native issues will help to raise awareness. Did you know that approximately 90,000 American Indian families are under-housed or homeless? Or that only 13% of American Indians have a college degree? Many people don't know this, which is why awareness needs to be spread.

Learn about American history related to Native Americans. Visit museums such as the National Museum of the American Indian to view the displays and read more about the past of America's native communities.

- Watch the PBS series "We Shall Remain." (This is recommended for older kids)
- This website is also a good resource, <https://www.powwows.com/can-help-native-americans/>

Pray

Thank God for the amazing diversity of people. Pray for opportunities to learn about other cultures and for an open heart that will love people who are different from you.

Participate

Time to Play!

American Indian games were used to bring people together and to remind them to include each other in their various activities. These games strengthened people's bodies and minds, and played by kids of all genders and ages!

TOE TOSS STICK:

Apache Indians played this game:

Any number may play.

Equipment: stick, piece of paper.



To set up play, you first place the paper on the ground. Then you stand behind the paper and balance a stick on your toe. The object is to toss the stick as high as you can and have it land on the paper. The player with the highest toss that lands on the paper wins.

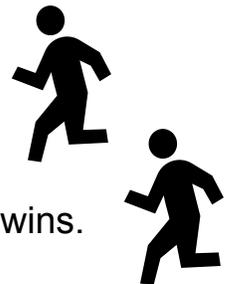
RUNNING GAME

Klamath Indians of the Northwest Coast played this game:

Any number may play.

Equipment: None.

Play: Players line up behind a starting line. Taking a deep breath, they run as far as they can while yelling loudly. When a player runs out of breath they must stop and stand still. The player running the greatest distance before running out of breath wins.



BEAN GAME

Cherokee Indians of North Carolina & Oklahoma played this game:

Any number may play.

Equipment: A shallow basket (paper plate), seven flat sided beans or dried pumpkin seeds marked with paint or marker on one side only.

Play: Object of game is to toss and catch beans flipping then from unmarked side up to marked side up. Before play, decide how many turns each player will take. Players alternate turns, but scores for each turn are totaled. All 7 beans are placed plain side up on the bottom of the basket. Holding sides of basket, carefully toss beans up and catch them trying to flip beans over to marked side during the toss. Count the number of beans landing marked side up for your score. If any beans fall out of the basket player loses that turn and gets no score. After all players have taken the designated number of turns add the individual scores. Highest score wins. Tooth picks or corn kernels can be given to children as scoring pieces. Each child can count his markers at the end of the game. This game is good for young children learning to count.



Wrap Up

God loves you and desires to see you love others the same way, generously and unconditionally. Appreciating other cultures by learning about their games, hobbies, foods, etc., can be a fun worthwhile hobby.

Take a Moment to Breathe

Drawing Breath

Remember the sightless drawing activity from a few weeks ago? We are going to do a sightless breath exercise now!

You will need a piece of paper and something to draw with. With your eyes closed, slowly breathe in and as you inhale, start drawing a upward line on your paper to match your breath. Now breathe out and allow a downward line to react to your exhale. Keep doing this 4-5 times. Now open your eyes and see the journey that your breath led you on!

