CHILDREN'S ACTIVITES

NOTES

SET THE SCENE

Tell the group some of the things that you really like about your life, such as your family, playing sports, church etc. You could even bring in a few props to illustrate these areas.

Ask the group to share some of the things they really like about their lives.

Tell the group that God wants to change lives for the better and throughout the Bible there are examples of this.

THE BIBLE

Read the story of Jesus healing the paralysed man in **Luke 5:17-26.** (You could use the Message Bible for a more modern translation.) Tell the group that the man in the story is disabled and cannot walk. Because of this he is unable to enjoy all sorts of things.

1. Who brought the man to see Jesus? (His friends – 19)

2. What was the man carried to Jesus on? (His friends brought him on a mat – 19)

3. Why was it difficult to get to see Jesus? (Because there were so many people gathered round him – 20)

4. How did the man get into the house? (His friends lowered him through the roof – 20)

5. What two things did Jesus say to the man? ("Friend, your sins are forgiven" – 21. "Take your mat and go home" – 24)

6. What did the man do after Jesus had spoken to him? (He got up and walked – 25)

GO A LITTLE DEEPER

Tell them that God can use anyone, regardless of their age, to help change lives for the better. Share this verse from Proverbs with the group and ask them what sorts of things they can do in response.

- Speak up for the people who have no voice, for the rights of all the down-and-outers. Speak out for justice! Stand up for the poor and destitute! PROVERBS 31: 8-9 **(THE MESSAGE)**

SO WHAT ABOUT US?

Tell the group that there are many children in the world who do not have happy lives.

Ask the group if they know of any problems a child living in poverty might face. For example: no access to schooling, not enough food, disease, lack of water. You may want to have a couple of photographs of children in poverty for them to focus on.

Ask the kids if they think that God can help these children just like Jesus helped the man who could not walk.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Tell the group that God sent Jesus to show each of us that we can make a difference in other people's lives. It doesn't have to be as dramatic as helping someone to walk again. By simply sharing what we have with someone who doesn't have a lot we can honour God.

Compassion is an organisation that helps people to change the lives of children living in poverty, just like God calls us to.

If you can, have a picture of a Compassion sponsored child at hand. Explain that the child lives in a very poor community, but with the help of their sponsor and their local church, Compassion ensures they have everything they need to live a happy life.

LET'S PRAY

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for all the lovely things you have given us to enjoy in our lives.

Today we pray for those children who do not have such happy lives and feel forgotten, sick, hungry or afraid. Please keep these children safe and help them to know your love today and every day.

Amen

NOTES

ACTIVITIES

Here are some more ideas to help the children really engage with the issues raised by your presentation.

1. Don't be a party to poverty

Hold a party for the group. Set up tables with six children at each one. Set out plates and cakes, finger food, drinks – but only for four of the places.

Ask the children on each table how they feel about it.

Explain that the two children on each table who don't have any food represent the world's children living in poverty and hunger, which makes up one third of all children. And the children who have lots of food represent the children in the world who have enough to eat.

Encourage the children who have lots of food to share with the other children. Tell them that there is more than enough food in the world for everyone, we just need to get better at sharing it.

2. A thankful picture

Collect some magazines and catalogues containing lots of pictures. Ask the group to go through the magazines and cut out pictures of things they like and things that make their life pleasurable. This might include pictures of toys, food, holidays, friends etc.

Get the class to stick these onto a sheet of paper along with prayers of thanks they have written for the nice things they have in their lives.

3. Children of prayer

Ask the group to think of a prayer they want to say for boys and girls who live in poverty. Cut out some paper outlines of children and encourage the group to write their prayers onto the cut-outs.

These can then be posted around your church for the weeks to come. Ask your church leader if the group could read some of the prayers in a worship service.

NOTES

AROUND EASTER

4. One pound day

This activity could be used during Lent to get the group thinking about what they would be prepared to give up. Agree amongst the group that every single person will take part in a one pound day, where you only have one single pound to spend in a day. You could give them each a pound or ask their parents to give them one.

What choices will you make?

What will you do with the pound?

What CAN'T you do – what do you have to miss out on?

How can you be creative with the pound – perhaps as an individual, or as a group or a whole community – to make it really 'work' (e.g. combine all the pounds to produce tickets for a fundraising event).

At the end of the day, perhaps donate the average amount that you or your family would normally spend in a day to Compassion.

5. Walk the talk

It's been said that you never really understand somebody until you "walk a mile in their shoes".

How about going on a sponsored walk - but in somebody else's shoes? Swap shoes (or wear funny shoes/boots) and get sponsored to walk one mile (or less if your group is young) in these 'other shoes'. The message is one of hearing and understanding more about the stories of children in poverty – and acting to change the story.

NOTES