



# JOURNEY IN... YEAR TWO THE DIVINE WITHIN ART

## This lesson's Big Ideas:

- When we recognize that the Divine that is within us is also in every other human being, we feel compassion for ourselves and for others.
- Compassion, the deep understanding and sharing of another being's feelings, can be cultivated and nurtured.
- Acted upon, compassion contributes to our own well-being and the greater good of the entire world.

## Lesson Materials

- Plenty of paper in various weights, textures, colors
- Magazines, old calendars for cutting up into collage images
- Stamps
- Ink pads
- Glue sticks
- Greeting card-sized envelopes
- Box in which to store finished, dry cards
- Copy of congregation's weekly Embracing Meditation

## TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

Jesus said to them, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Rabbi, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." - Matthew 25:35-40

When you begin to touch your heart or let your heart be touched, you begin to discover that it's bottomless, that it doesn't have any resolution, that this heart is huge, vast, and limitless. You begin to discover how much warmth and gentleness is there, as well as how much space. - Pema Chödrön

A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. - A. Einstein

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

- The Dalai Lama

**YOUR FIELD  
EXPERIENCES:  
FEEDBACK AND  
NOTES**

**GATHERING AND FOCUSING**

⌚ 2-3 minutes

Images and our feelings:

What are some things that make you feel happy when you see them?

What colors do you find uplifting?

**PRIMARY ACTIVITY  
CARD MAKING**

⌚ 45 minutes

In our Art Workshop, we'll be making a supply of hand-made cards for our church's Pastoral Care team to use in their ministry to those among us who are sick, grieving or in need on encouragement.

**Teacher Talk about Cards**

Our Pastoral Care team is a group of people from our church who work with our ministers to take good care of people who are having a difficult time. When someone is sick, they visit them and sometimes take them good food or more medicine. When they're elderly, they go to their houses and take tapes of the church services for them to listen to. When someone is dying or has died, they come to the hospital or home to be with the family and help them make hard decisions. Another thing they do is send a LOT of cards, so many that they often run out. Sometimes they send store-bought cards, but people are really happy when they get hand-made cards from kids and grownups here at church. In our ART WORKSHOP, the kids will be making beautiful, hand-made cards that the Pastoral Care team will send to those who are sick, grieving or need encouragement.

Inside the cards, there will be words of compassion and comfort. Our job this morning is to write those words. [On the first week, you'll write them inside blank cards that will be decorated later. On subsequent weeks, the cards from the last Art Workshop will be ready to write in.] There are people who write the words inside cards as their job every day! We're going to do their caring work ourselves!

The week's Embracing Meditation notes should be in your classroom. Encourage a moment of loving thoughts for those who are in need of our very real care.

### Making the cards:

- Show the kids the envelopes, first. They can make the cards however they'd like, so long as they fit into one of these envelopes or so long as the child can make a neat envelope of their own.
- Write on the chalkboard four categories into which our cards might fit: "Get Well", "In Sympathy" "In Celebration" and "Encouragement".
- Brainstorm some images and colors that help us to show compassion and help the recipient of the card feel cared for and uplifted.
- Show the kids some of the different techniques and methods of assembly that one can use in making cards by passing around some of the samples. Remind them that their cards don't have to be just like the samples or be perfect.
- Our job in this lesson is the artistic part. They should feel free to put beautiful words on the outside. We won't worry about the right words on the inside until we get into our Story Workshop, where we use words to express ourselves. For today, they should imagine and create the images, colors and textures of their cards. Be sure to leave plenty of room for a message inside!
- Give the children the entire hour to generate three cards, one in each category. On the back of their card, please have them write "Made with Love by \_\_\_\_\_" for identification purposes.

Remember to allow 10 minutes for clean up and closing! Collect the cards in an area where they can dry. Store each week's cards in a box labeled with the group's color and the date. These cards will go on to the Story Workshop where the kids will write the compassionate, caring messages for the inside.

### **CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING**

🕒 2 minutes

Gather in a circle, assume a comfortable meditative position or take each other's hands. Speak these words, or words like them, the children repeating each line after you, the teacher.

The Holy is inside us  
 And the Holy is inside everyone  
 May we love and understand ourselves  
 May we love and understand others  
 May we love and understand the whole Universe  
 May our hearts be tender  
 May our minds shine friendliness into the world

*and/or*

We want others to be happy  
 Let us practice compassion  
 We want to be happy ourselves  
 Let us practice compassion