

VIRTUE

Objective: *To think about why being good brings happiness inside*

Key Words: *Lydda (Lod), Israel, Roman, Africa, knight, goodness, lazy, greedy, townsfolk, princess, victim, blindfolded, spear, trust, inner virtue, bliss*

QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

Discuss what this means.

Can you think of an instance when it was true?

SILENT SITTING

Steps 1, 4 (See page 40)

Step 5: Imagine a waterfall of white light about three inches above your head.

Feel it flowing down around you ...

See how clear it is and how it sparkles ...

Imagine it flowing right through you, washing away any uncomfortable feelings ...

It feels cool and refreshing ...

As it passes through your head, it washes out unpleasant thoughts.

Through your chest and heart ... Giving you good health and a caring attitude ...

Down through your arms to your hands ...

So your hands become more helping and giving ... Down through your stomach ..

So you become more careful that what you eat and drink is clean and fresh ...

Down to your legs and feet ...

They become strong and willing to go where others need your help ...

The shining white light flows through you making you feel very happy and contented

Know that you are a good person who will do good things.

Step 6.

STORY TELLING

ST. GEORGE AND THE GREEDY DRAGON

by Carole Alderman (adapted from a traditional story)

Long, long ago in the third century, lived a Christian boy in a town called Lydda (now Lod) in Israel. His parents were rich, but when he was fifteen he left home and became a Roman soldier. He had great strength, was able to bear many difficulties, was fearless and brave. He became a man of great goodness and when he was older and was given his parents' riches, he sold everything and gave the money away to poor people.

He travelled far and wide and one day, in Africa, he heard of a town called Silene where the people were being terrorised by a greedy dragon. So he decided to go and try to help them.

... ..

When the dragon had been small, it had lived on roots, shoots and fruits, but as it grew up, it became lazy and couldn't be bothered to look for food when it was easier to gobble up a little animal passing by. The dragon also became greedy. It would lie in the sun thinking only of its next meal. And it began to eat more and more, far more than it needed to be healthy. One day a child came to play on the bank of the lake where the dragon lived in the reeds. Thinking she looked good to eat, the dragon caught her too. Soon the child's relatives came to look for her. The dragon, now fully grown, attacked them too. They all ran for their lives.

The dragon was clever and noticed that these people were quite plump, unlike the thin farmers he had seen working in the fields. They came from the big town nearby where the king lived in a beautiful palace. The townsfolk had become a bit selfish and were only concerned with their own comfortable living and getting more and more things for themselves, forgetting the needs of their cousins in the country. So the dragon, now far too lazy ever to bother gathering roots, shoots or fruits to eat, followed their scent and, ignoring the thin farmers, came into the town. It attacked anyone it met with its long claws, or with a blow from its huge tail, or with its terrible poisonous breath. Whenever the dragon appeared, the terrified people grabbed their children and ran indoors. Everyone who was not quick enough, like the very young or the very old, was caught. The younger ones (who were more tasty) were taken away by the greedy dragon. The people lived in constant fear and could not get on with their daily lives.

The king called a meeting. They decided to leave two sheep every day by the lake for the dragon's dinner, so that it would not come into the town again. This worked for a while, although they were sad for the poor sheep.

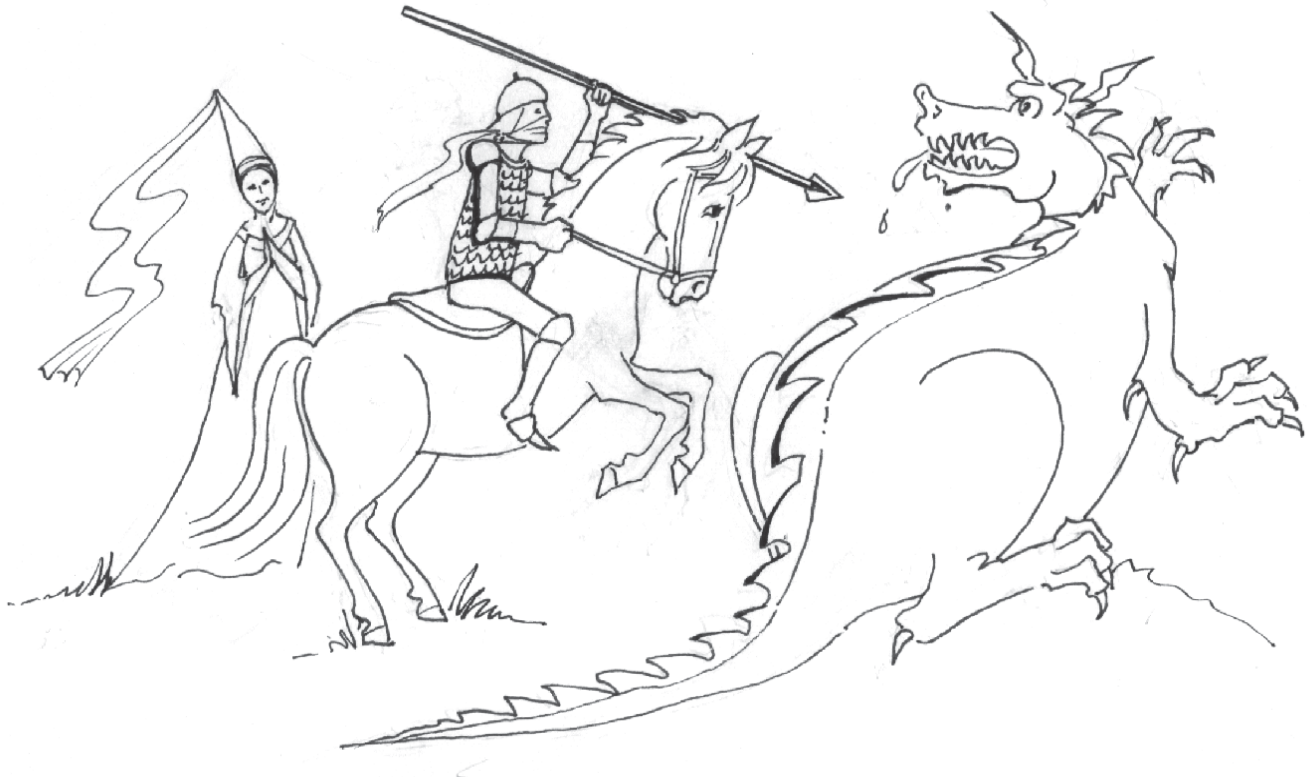
But eventually there were no more sheep left. What could they do? Who would volunteer to go to be eaten? Of course, no-one wanted to. What could they do now?

They decided to put the names of all the children and young people in a bowl and draw lots to see who the unlucky victim must be. So every evening a blind-folded child would draw out a name.

After some weeks, when many children had disappeared from the town, the princess's name was picked. She had refused to leave the town and the people she loved. Her father had asked her to go to the safety of relatives far away, but she would not desert her friends in trouble. She preferred to take her chance fairly with the rest.

The next day the princess, dressed in her royal robes and with head held high, made her way to the dragon's abode. When she neared the lake and was out of sight of the townspeople, she fell on the ground weeping. For a long time she waited. The dragon was in no hurry. It knew its food was always near. Then the princess heard the sound of a horse. She looked up to see bright armour glittering in the sunshine. It was a young knight.

Just at that moment the dragon appeared through the reeds, coming for his meal. With eyes flashing, tail thrashing, the terrible head moving nimbly on its long scaly neck, and with jaws snapping fearfully, it charged towards the princess.



How could the knight defeat such a monster? To get close enough to aim a blow with his spear would bring him within range of its poisonous breath. Quickly untying the scarf from around his helmet, he put it over his face and nose. Then holding his spear, he galloped towards the monster.

His horse didn't waver, so much did it love and trust its master. Pulling the horse up short, the young knight sprang from the saddle towards the monster's head. One blow from his spear was enough. The dragon let out a bellow which was heard for miles around then fell to the ground.

The young knight helped the trembling princess onto his horse and led her back to her father. Seeing them the townspeople cheered with relief and delight that their enemy was dead. The grateful king offered the knight anything he wanted as a reward.

What do you think he asked for? Was it gold and riches? Was it to marry the beautiful princess?

But the young knight asked only that the people live good lives and love each other as Christ had taught and that they kill the inner dragon of greed within themselves so they would live in peace and happiness together.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the little dragon begin eating animals instead of roots, shoots and fruits?
2. What bad action did this lead to when the dragon was bigger?
3. Why did the dragon prefer to eat the townsfolk rather than the farmers?
4. What did the people do about the dragon?
5. Why did the princess refuse to go and live somewhere safe?
6. What good qualities did the princess show when her name was drawn from the bowl?
7. How was the princess saved from the dragon?
8. What did the brave knight ask as a reward for killing the dragon?
9. How did you feel listening to the story?
10. What does the story mean to you?

GROUP SINGING

WE WISH YOU LOVE AND PEACE

(music and lyrics by Sara John)

We wish you love and peace,
We wish you love and peace,
We wish you love and peace
And a life full of bliss.

Good values we bring
To you and your kin,
We wish you love and peace
And a life full of bliss.

(Repeat x 2)

This song is sung to the tune of 'We wish you a merry Christmas'

GROUP ACTIVITY

GAME: GOOD STEPS

This is a floor game in which numbered squares of paper are placed in rows for stepping on.

Each square has a personal statement written on it.

Some are positive e.g. "I like sharing", "I am tidy", but other squares have a negative comment, e.g. "Sometimes I do not help", or "Sometimes I tell a lie".

The game is played with two teams and a Caller who throws the dice and calls out the numbers.

Steps

- 1 The Caller throws the dice and calls the number.
2. The first player from the first team steps onto that square and calls out what is written on it.
3. The first player from the second team steps onto the square of the second number called.

When someone lands on a negative square, they go to the back of their team's line to begin again.

They are replaced by their next team member who begins from the square in front of the negative square they vacated.

The winners are the first team to get all their members across the stepping stones and reach the end.

Close the lesson: If the teacher wishes, the lesson can be closed by asking the children to form a circle and say, "Every time we think good, speak good or do good, it adds to the goodness of the whole world."

Extension Exercise / Links to Other Subjects:

Historical Link. Look at the lives of other great soldiers who have helped people without asking for a reward.

Geography Link: Look up the world atlas to find Lod in Israel, Rome in Italy and the continent of Africa. How far do the children think these places are from where they live?