

CHRISTMAS

The wonderful aroma of Christmas

Supplies:

- A copy of the "Christmas cactus" plant with story on the back for each child
- A copy of the "Christmas cactus" on cardboard
- Small pieces of string
- Toothpicks or short skewers
- Any type of container for the plant cutting
- Potting soil
- Glue
- Scissors
- Cuttings of the Christmas cactus (*Schlumbergera*) or any cutting of your choice
- A few items that children can recognize by the smell of it

Welcome

Sensory game: Blindfold the children and let them sit down in a circle. Take one item and send it around or let a leader walk around for the children to just smell it. Children need to guess what the item is.

Worship

Any Christmas song of your choice.

Word

There is a legend about a boy who lived in a jungle. He prayed to God to give him a sign of Christmas and to relieve the heat and humidity of the jungle. When he woke up on Christmas morning, almost all the cactus plants in the jungle were in full bloom.

We celebrate Christmas as one of the biggest events in history. This baby that we celebrate is our hope. In the way that Jesus was born we can already see who God really is. God's power is not found in the powerful or fancy places on earth, but in the humble places. Just like in our story where the boy found it in the blooming Christmas cactus plants in the jungle.

What do flowers symbolize in the Bible?

Flowers symbolize beauty, fragility (meaning something that gets hurt easily) and love of God, but it also symbolizes the fall of humankind. The beauty of a flower eventually wilts and dies.

Jesus came to give us eternal life and to show us the eternal love of God. He is the plant and we are the flowers.

May this Christmas teach us a few lessons:

1. What do we usually want for Christmas? (Gifts)
2. What did God give us for Christmas? (Jesus)
3. What is Jesus' main goal for us? (Eternal life)
4. How can we share this gift with others? (By living like Jesus)

Listen to what we can learn from 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 (NIV)
For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task?

We learn that people are also like flowers, we can get hurt very easily. We need to take care of one another. If we take care of one another we will bloom. If we ground our roots in Jesus we will carry beautiful flowers.

Always be like Jesus, a flower blooming in someone's life. This Christmas we are going to replant a cutting for someone to remind them of this message.

Be the wonderful aroma, be content with less, be gentle and tender like Jesus.



Working and Playing

Option 1: Replant the cuttings with potting soil into containers. The containers could be empty yoghurt tubs or tins that you decorate. To make a cutting, pinch the section off with your fingernail just after the second or third leaf. Take the small copies of the Christmas cactus on cardboard and the story, stick it on either side of the toothpick/short skewer. Push the stick into the soil. Give this plant to someone special this Christmas.



Option 2: Give a copy of the Christmas cactus picture to each child to colour or decorate. Thread a string through it and hang it up as a Christmas decoration.

