Saint Julie Billiart

There Is Room for You

Ages about 7-11 | Video 8:39 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth God loved Julie throughout her illness and recovery. She taught, welcomed children, accepted help, and worked with friends to share God's goodness.

Learning goals Children will name ways Julie gave and received help, explain that her dignity did not depend on walking, and practice patient encouragement.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: Can a person need help and still have something to give? Introduce Julie, a teacher in France who spent many years unable to walk. Notice both kinds of help in her story.

Watch and notice

Watch the story. For a shorter attention span, pause after Françoise's friendship develops and name one way she listens. Continue through Julie's recovery and the return to her bedside classroom.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What could Julie offer from her bed?
She taught prayers and faith, listened, welcomed children, and encouraged people. Her life of love was already happening.

2. How did Julie receive help?
Friends helped her escape danger; her niece cared for her; Françoise returned, listened, and became a partner in their work.

3. Did God begin loving Julie only when she could walk again?
No. God had been with her all along. Recovery changed what she could do, not her dignity or how precious she was.

4. What did Julie want teachers to give a struggling child?
Gentleness, patience, careful teaching, and practical help. A child who finds a lesson difficult is still worth teaching and encouraging.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Children draw Julie giving help and receiving help. Ask them to explain who is helping and how. An adult may write the child's spoken answer.

Read & Write Children identify giving and receiving in the story, explain Julie's dignity before recovery, and plan patient encouragement. Use the sentence starters or dictate as needed.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: use two gestures, offering and receiving, to sort examples from the story. Ask for one kind phrase for a learner.

Ages 9-11: discuss why needing assistance does not make a person less generous or capable of friendship. Notice Françoise's patient listening.

Encourage a learner | Optional 4 minutes

Give pairs a simple drawing or pattern task. One explains while the other tries, then they switch. Practice asking what is unclear and offering encouragement. Children may choose speaking or pointing. Discuss how patience helps someone learn without doing everything for them.

Look for understanding Listen for one example of Julie giving and one of receiving. Children should recognize that God's love and Julie's dignity preceded her recovery.

Closing prayer Good God, thank you for staying close to us. Help us welcome others, accept the help we need, and encourage people with patience. Saint Julie Billiart, pray for us. Amen.

At home Thank someone who helps you. Offer patient encouragement during a shared activity, and ask for help when you need it too.

Handout answer notes Giving: teaching, prayer, or encouragement. Receiving: care, rescue, or patient friendship. Julie's dignity preceded recovery. Accept a respectful, specific encouragement plan.

Teach with care

The story includes illness and escape from danger. Children may discuss the characters without sharing private experiences. Allow a quiet break if needed. The sisters' history recounts Julie's recovery during a Sacred Heart novena. Prayer does not guarantee recovery, and disability is not failed faith. The child at the doorway is dramatized. Do not reenact forced standing, carrying, or escape; keep response activities accessible.

Words to explain Catechesis: learning and sharing the Christian faith. Novena: prayer over nine days. Gentleness: treating others with patient, thoughtful care.

Sources for the leader

Life and bedside teaching: Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Julie Billiart

Community and recovery: Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Foundation of the Institute