



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session, read all the readings

Deuteronomy 5:12—15

Psalm 81:3—4, 5—6, 6—8, 10—11

2 Corinthians 4:6—11

Mark 2:23—3:6 or 2:23—28

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Is there a particular reading that appeals to you? Is there a word or image that engages you?

Read the following **Word in Liturgy** and **Catholic Doctrine** sections. These give you background on what you will be doing this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need.

### The Word In Liturgy

The commandment to keep holy the Sabbath is found in both Exodus and Deuteronomy. The reading from Deuteronomy describes the day of rest as a remembrance of the people's deliverance through the Exodus. God's action of bringing them into a "place of rest" — the Promised Land—is recalled and celebrated by the Sabbath observance. Keeping the Sabbath is a blessing to those who, under the hard conditions of labor are given a day of rest in honor of God. This passage emphasizes the theme found in the gospel which provides the doctrinal focus to today's catechesis: the commandment to keep holy the Lord's Day is an expression of both the love and the goodness of God.

By the time of Jesus, the Sabbath looked forward to a time of fulfillment, when God's promises to the people would be completely realized. Mark is concerned both to identify Jesus with King David, and to establish that in Jesus the messianic era had already begun. The showbread eaten by David's soldiers was heaped on a golden table outside the holy of holies in the temple, and was supposed to be sacred to God and eaten by no one but the priests. But just as David had the authority to take and eat the bread, so Jesus and his disciples may strip grain for wheat in the fields, even though this was considered work, and thus a violation of the Sabbath rest. Moreover, because the time of fulfillment which the traditional Sabbath promised has arrived in Jesus, it is appropriate that the disciples of Jesus, and Jesus himself, behave with freedom in relation to the laws of the Sabbath.

The Pharisees were not the religious authorities of Jesus' day, but rather a pious Jewish sect that was zealous in their religious observance of the Law. Some accepted Jesus and his message; others resisted Jesus and his message, as do those who figure in the gospel. In his



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clash with the Pharisees over whether it is permissible to heal on the Sabbath, Jesus presents a challenge that reaches far beyond this historical moment and speaks to all people. "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath," In other words, the law of God is for human good, and anything that subverts this good in the name of religion is to be firmly resisted.

Today we continue a series of readings from 2 Corinthians chosen independently from the first reading and the Gospel. This passage speaks of the flawed humanity of Paul and those who minister with him as the "earthen vessels" which nonetheless bear the transcendent glory of God. Paul speaks of the humble experience of bearing witness through hardship and difficulty. The ministry of Paul and his coworkers is marked not by flashy success, but by the joyful realization of a gift that cannot be overcome.

### **Catholic Doctrine**

#### ***Keep Holy the Lord's Day***

According to Sacred Scripture, The Lord's Day is the first day of the week, when Christ rose from the dead (Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:2, Luke 24:1, John 20:1). Thus Sunday is set aside as special, when Christian believers rejoice. From the earliest days of the Church, Sunday has been celebrated as the first of all feasts, that day of the week when Jesus Christ rose from the dead (CCC 2174).

Sunday fulfills the third commandment, Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day. Sunday is associated with Christ because of his resurrection on Sunday (CCC 2175). Sunday is also described as the "eighth day" because it prepares us for the eternal eighth day of eternal joy and union with God in Heaven. Therefore we come together as a parish community to raise our minds, hearts, and voices to worship God in the sacrifice of the Mass.

Because we Catholics observe our salvation in Christ on this day of resurrection, we enjoy rest and leisure on Sunday. We attempt to cease work and instead dedicate this day to treasuring familial, cultural, social, and religious aspects of life (CCC 2184). Catholics are also encouraged to engage in pious or reflective activities on this day, and to devote time to the care for the elderly or those with special needs (CCC 2186).