



a Kendall Hunt Company

Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year C, junior high - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Isaiah 43:16-21

John 8:1-11

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

God of healing,

you make all things new.

Help us to accept the grace of your healing

so that we may let go of past regrets.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

On this Fifth Sunday of Lent we acknowledge the healing and new life that God offers through reconciliation. It is not easy to let go of past hurts. To forgive the hurtful actions of others, and to forgive ourselves takes courage and faith. Begin today's session by inviting the young people to reflect on the areas of their lives where they are in need healing. Discuss:

- Is there a situation in your life that you need to reconcile?
- Do you hold on to past hurts?
- What do you need to let go of at this time in order to accept God's healing?

Invite the young people to think of what they are hanging on to and ask them to close one of their hands into a fist. Play some soft music and ask them to close their eyes and imagine that God is giving them a new start. Ask them to open their fist and let go of any past regret that they are holding on to.

Through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, the Church offers us a new start. This sacrament helps us to let go and let God's healing take place in our hearts.



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Listening to the Word of God

In today's Old Testament reading from the book of Isaiah, listen to God promise the Israelites a new start.

Read Isaiah 43:16-21.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does the Lord say about things of the past?
- What is the Lord about to do?
- Why does the Lord promise to give the Israelites a new start?

In the Gospel we hear about a woman who has been caught in adultery. Listen to find out what Jesus does.

Read John 8:1-11.

Allow for silence

- Who brings the woman before Jesus?
- What is the woman accused of?
- What does the Law of Moses say should be done to the woman?
- What does Jesus say?
- Why does everyone go away except Jesus and the woman?
- What does Jesus tell the woman?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings

In the first reading from the Old Testament the Israelites are given hope and encouragement during their exile in Babylon. They are told to let go of the things of old because the Lord is giving them a new start. God forgives their past transgressions offers them new life. This reading from the book of Isaiah reassures the Israelites that God has not given up on them. They can look forward to what God is about to do on their behalf. After all, they remain God's

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chosen people.

In today's Gospel we hear a story about a woman whom the scribes and Pharisees bring before Jesus because she has been accused of adultery. We get the idea that the religious leaders are trying to trick Jesus so that they will have something to accuse him of. They are quick to point out that the Law of Moses says that the woman should be stoned. Jesus' reaction is brilliant. After writing in the dirt on the ground he stands up and tells them that whoever is without sin can throw the first stone.

Jesus is left standing alone with the woman. He asks her if anyone has condemned her. Then he tells her to go and sin no more. Jesus gives the woman the gift of a new start. She leaves her encounter with Jesus reconciled to God, to her community and to herself.

The story in the Gospel today reveals that God forgives our past sins and loves us unconditionally. This frees us to let go of the past so that we may lead a new life of grace.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Have you ever been quick to judge another person?
- Is it sometimes easier to find fault with others than to look within ourselves?
- When have you been given a new start?

If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Reconciliation

God forgives our sins and loves us unconditionally. In Jesus this divine love is shown fully. Jesus ate and drank with sinners offering them healing and a new start.

For those who have sinned after Baptism, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation offers forgiveness and a new start. The healing brought about by the sacrament helps a person to change. Catholics celebrate repentance and conversion in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



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- Why is it important to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation?
- How does the Sacrament of Reconciliation offer healing?
- Why is the season of Lent a good time to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation?

The Gospel in Life

Take the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation at your parish this week.

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 9

Junior High, Church and Sacraments, chapter 11

Blest Are We

Grade 7, chapter 12

Grade 8, chapter 14

