



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session read all the readings.

Wisdom 18:6-9

Psalm 33:1, 12, 18-19, 20-22

Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19 [or 11:1-2, 8-12]

Luke 12:32-48

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading that appealed to you? Was there a word or image that engaged you?

Read the 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 for the session.

## The Word in Liturgy



The Book of Wisdom, written in the century before the birth of Jesus at Alexandria aimed to strengthen the faith of the Jewish community living in the diaspora. Today's passage comes from the second part of the book (cc. 11-19), a lengthy homily on Israel's history in which the author reflects on God's abiding presence and constant saving action among the people. This section deals with the events of the first Passover, Israel's escape from Egypt. The reading was no doubt chosen because of how it portrays the Israelites who "awaited the salvation of the just . . ." That attitude of watchful readiness is precisely the attitude commended by Jesus in today's Gospel.

We continue to read from the section of Luke's Gospel in which he arranges his material as a travel narrative. Jesus is on a journey to Jerusalem, where he will encounter his death/destiny and there receive ultimate vindication in the glory of his resurrection. Along the way, Jesus instructs his followers about the meaning of true discipleship. Luke, of course, is concerned to tell the story in a way that will help his own (and our!) community to live more faithfully as disciples of Jesus during this time between his resurrection and his final coming. A first section (vv. 32-34) deals with the disciples' attitude towards wealth, which should be characterized by detachment and generosity towards the poor. Then, in the concluding section (vv. 35-48 [35-40 in the short version]), Jesus teaches that his disciples must be watchful and ready for the master's return. The eschatological context reflects Luke's

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concern that his community live in light of the expected final coming. The concluding parable about not abusing one's stewardship is a further reinforcement of the idea that watchfulness and appropriate behavior are essential for the faithful disciple.

# **Catholic Doctrine**

## **Christian Hope**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church treats “hope” in two places, as a theological virtue and in its exposition on the first commandment. To understand this key concept, let us first explore the theological virtues. These are distinguished from human virtue in that faith, hope and love are gifts instilled by God and orient us toward union with the Trinity. They are, if you will, the highest of virtues. Faith, hope and love are the firm foundation of the correct moral life precisely because they have their origin in the Triune God. While they are given to us by God, they can, however, be perfected in the exercise of our Christian life or squandered by our neglect.

Hope is that steadfast orientation toward ultimate union with the divine. It is by hope that we desire heaven and have the firm conviction that with divine help we will attain to the promises of God offered to us and fulfilled in Christ. In difficult and painful times, indeed, in the “dark night of the soul” (as St. John of the Cross has written) it is hope which sustains us and keeps us from being discouraged.

The forerunner of our Christian hope is Abraham, who in faith believed in the promises of God. Faith is related to hope and seen by some theologians as preceding hope because to hope in something requires a goal—which can only be illuminated by faith in something, that something being the promises of God. Such was our forebear in faith, Abraham, who believed in the promise of God and whose hope was fulfilled in Isaac.

Christian hope is centered in the person of Jesus, his preaching, especially the beatitudes as they outline for us the path that takes us through difficulties in this life to the life which awaits us on high. Hope is nourished and sustained in prayer, especially the prayer that Jesus taught us wherein we express our longing for the coming kingdom, here yet not fully.