



a Kendall Hunt Company

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

Luke 12:49-53

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Dear Jesus,

You show us the way to live a good life.

You give us all we need to know how to speak and act honorably.

We know through your own life just how hard it can be sometimes to do the right thing, but you give us courage. Make us strong in the face of our own weakness.

And when we fall, help us remember that you are always there to help us get back up.

We know that we are not alone, but with you always.

In the name of Jesus, we pray, Amen.



Opening Life Reflection

List names of characters from books or movies who have had the courage to do the right thing. Describe the circumstances and suggest some things the character might have done to make his or her decision easier.

- What are some of the results to people, real or fictional, who do the right thing even though it's hard?
- When have you had to make a decision similar to one of the characters described?
- How can you help one another when it seems too hard to follow the Gospel?

After everyone has shared ideas, make connections from this discussion to the Gospel challenge of following Jesus.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading today, Jeremiah has a message from God that is not very popular among the people.

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Read Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What did Jeremiah think the Israelites should do?
- What did the princes think they should do?
- Why wasn't King Zedekiah very helpful?

We learn from Jesus in today's Gospel that following him will not always be easy. We may lose the friendship of people we care about.

Read Luke 12:49-53

Allow for silence.

- What is baptism and fire for Jesus in this passage?
- Do Jesus and Jeremiah share similar problems as prophets?
- What is so hard about Jesus' words?

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Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

The princes who advised King Zedekiah wanted to go against the Babylonians. They were sure other Babylonian enemies would help them fight. Jeremiah advised the king differently and said that the people should repent for their sinfulness. To return to God was the only way to solve their problems. The princes thought Jeremiah was a traitor and convinced the king to throw him into a muddy well where he was left die. One of the king's officials went to the king and said that it was wrong for Jeremiah to die. The king changed his mind and allowed Jeremiah to be saved.

The reading from Luke's Gospel shows that following Jesus isn't something we can do part way. We must say yes or no. We are either right or wrong. The good news is that Jesus is there to help us. He points out that some hard challenges faced him, too. We will either follow him or we won't. The results of our decision may separate us from others, even our own family.

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Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Have you encountered divisions in your life because you did something you believed was right?
- How have you witnessed for Christ through your actions and words?
- How have you been strengthened by doing something that was hard but right?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Way of Christ

As members of God's family we are called to proclaim God's love through our actions and words. We have two choices for ways to live. We can either do things that are right, or we can do things that are wrong. To live eternally with God, we must choose to live the right way. God is there to help us because we believe that God is stronger than evil. The way of good is the way to Christ. To do wrong, leads to our destruction. By loving Jesus, we can continue the good work God began in each of us.

- How are we encouraged by others throughout history who have been witnesses to their faith?
- How does Jesus help us be witnesses to our faith?
- What is the good work God began in you?

Sacrament Connection

Usually we want to do the right thing but we're not always successful in actually carrying out our plan. Many things may prevent us from doing what we know is best. This is not a new problem. In Roman's 7:15, Paul complains about this very thing. He says that he did not do what he wanted but what he hated. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we can find our way back to Jesus. By being sorry and trying to correct what we have done wrong, we can find goodness.

The Gospel in Life

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Although it may be hard, do something to show you follow Jesus. It could be that you know—someone who is doing something destructive (to themselves or someone else). Can you show them Jesus' love?

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 14
Junior High, Morality, chapters 1 and 2

