



a Kendall Hunt Company

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



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session read all the readings.

Wisdom 9:13-18b

Psalm 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14-17

Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Luke 14:25-33

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



Today's first reading and psalm, in their praise of wisdom, and expressions of longing for wisdom, echo the Gospel's call for a fair assessment of what is truly important in life. "Teach us to number our days aright," the psalmist cries out; the very transience of human life provokes a deep desire for wisdom. Yet wisdom is difficult to attain. The first reading, from the book of Wisdom, written in Alexandria at about 60 B.C. by a well-educated, sophisticated Hellenistic Jew, frankly acknowledges that many obstacles stand in the way of acquiring wisdom. Only with "your holy spirit" is it possible to become truly wise.

Several radical messages are interwoven in today's readings: Wisdom can only be gained through the help of God's spirit, love reconfigures our relationships, and detachment is the pre-requisite for true freedom in following Christ. Self-renunciation, a strong and challenging theme in today's gospel, may be the focus of today's catechesis.

### Catholic Doctrine

#### ***Self-Renunciation as Requirement for Discipleship***

In following Jesus as his disciples we are provided an example of self-emptying in the Lord



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himself who obeyed his heavenly Father to the point of suffering and dying upon the cross. On his way to Jerusalem and the cross, Jesus pointedly instructs his disciples (this Sunday's gospel) to be sure and count the cost of following him. The cost of following Jesus is to put the calculation of the kingdom of God before all else, including our most precious possession—our very self.

Another aspect of self-renunciation is detachment. In the spiritual life, detachment requires the necessary mastery of self so that both our inner core, the ego, (our dearest possession) and all our other "possessions" of family, primary groups and physical goods do not end up possessing us. As disciples of Jesus, the priority of the kingdom of God comes first (CCC 2544).

In our Catholic tradition, the Church has connected renunciation and discipleship in the discipline of priestly celibacy. In addition, there are those who freely embrace the evangelical counsels of Christ by taking vows of poverty, chastity and obedience as a way of witnessing to the world the priority of the kingdom of God. The consecrated life upholds for all the faithful the need to renounce self in following Jesus.

