



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



### Intermediate Session

Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18

Luke 18:9-14

## Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God of all creation, teach us to pray with humble hearts.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

## Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is humility in prayer. To begin have the children string prayer beads. Provide each child with three main beads and string. Smaller beads can be used in between the three central focus beads. Explain to the children that each bead can be used to help them pray.

Make a sample string of prayer beads and explain to the children that, the first bead is the forgiveness bead. This prayer bead can help remind us to ask God for forgiveness. The second bead represents God's love. This prayer bead can help us focus on the love that God has for each one of us. And the third bead is the giving bead. This prayer bead can help remind us to return the love that God has for us, by loving God and others.

- How can using prayer beads help you to pray?
- Why ask God for forgiveness in prayer?
- What helps remind you of God's love?

Allow time for discussion. When we ask God for forgiveness in prayer we come before God with humility. God hears and answers sincere prayer.



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# Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to how God hears and answers sincere prayer.

Read Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18.

Allow for silence.

## Scripture Discussion Starters

- Does God listen to those who pray?
- Does God accept bribes?
- Whose prayers are not ignored?

In today's Gospel listen to Jesus tell a story about praying with humility.

Read Luke 18:9-14.

Allow for silence.



- Why does Jesus tell this story?
- How does the Pharisee pray?
- How does the tax collector pray?
- What does the story teach about praying with humility?

## Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings.

Today's first reading from the Old Testament offers direction to God's people on how to pray. First, praying with generosity is stressed, because God is generous. Then we find a reminder that God cannot be bribed. The passage goes on to stress that God hears and answers sincere prayer.

This reading also emphasizes the concern that God has for those who have been

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wronged—the weak and powerless. God is on the side of the lowly who cry out for help.

The Gospel continues the theme of prayer with the story of the self-righteous Pharisee and the tax collector who addresses God with deep humility. Jesus tells this parable to teach his followers about humility in prayer. The Pharisee comes before God boasting about his own greatness. He lists for God all the good things he has done, and while still in prayer he belittles others. On the other hand the tax collector speaks to God with humility. Aware of his own sinfulness, he comes before God pleading for mercy. The tax collector does not compare himself with anyone. Instead, he brings himself honestly before God. The sincere prayer of the tax collector is heard and answered by God.

## **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- How are we to come before God in prayer?
- What is sincere prayer?
- Why is the tax collector's prayer sincere?

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

## **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

### **Humility before God in Prayer**

Prayer helps to deepen our relationship with God. It is important to examine how we come before God in prayer. Prayer is a God-centered activity, not a self-centered activity. Believers pray from the depths of a humble heart. All prayer is rooted in humility before the awesome love of God. Our Catholic tradition teaches the necessity of humility in two forms of prayer, meditation and contemplation.

In meditation we express what is in our heart silently and with humility. Our mind, heart and imagination help us listen to God's call in our lives. In meditation we focus our attention on scripture, spiritual writings, prayers of our church, or images to help deepen our conversation with God and strengthen our ability to follow Christ.



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In contemplative prayer, we silently spend time in the loving presence of God. This type of praying requires a humble surrender to the will of God. Contemplative prayer is a gift given by God to those who pray with faith and trust in God's love.

- How do you express your prayers to God?
- What prayers from our Catholic Tradition help you to meditate?
- How is contemplative prayer like spending time with a close friend?

## **The Gospel in Life**

This week use your prayer beads to help you express your prayers to God.

### **Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition**

At Home Family Guide, theme 17

Grade 4, chapter 25

Grade 5, chapter 25

Grade 6, chapter 25

Junior High, Church and Sacraments, chapter 4

