



a Kendall Hunt Company

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



### Intermediate Session

Wisdom 11:22-12:2

Luke 19:1-10

## Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Merciful God,

even when we turn away from you, you call us back.

Thank you for never giving up on us.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.



## Opening Life Reflection

The main for today is justification. To begin provide each child with a ball of modeling clay. Invite the children to imagine God holding all of creation in loving hands. Then invite the children to use the clay to represent God embracing all of creation. Discuss:

- What does your work of art reveal about God?
- How is God like an artist?
- What does it mean to live in relationship with God?

Allow time for discussion. We were created to live in relationship with God and others. When we cooperate with God's grace we live in right relationship with God, others and all of creation. Justification is God's saving action that frees us from sin and puts us in right relationship with God.



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## Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading today listen to hear of the saving power of God

Read Wisdom 11:22-12:2.

Allow for silence.

## Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does this reading reveal about God?
- How is God all-powerful?
- How does God approach the sinner?

In today's Gospel listen to how Jesus welcomes a man named Zacchaeus.

Read Luke 19:1-10.

Allow for silence.



- How does Jesus welcome Zacchaeus?
- How does Zacchaeus respond to Jesus?
- What is the reaction of the religious leaders and the crowd?
- Why do the people dislike Zacchaeus?

## Scripture Background

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

In the first reading from the book of Wisdom, God is shown to be all-powerful and all-merciful. The whole world is embraced by the love of God. Even the sinner is held in God's mercy. The call is to turn away from sin and trust in the Lord. This uplifting passage reveals the truth about the absolute love of God.

In today's Gospel we find the story of Zacchaeus, a rich tax collector. Because of his

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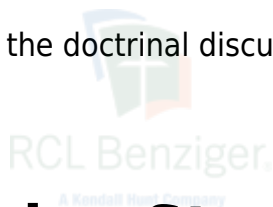
profession, Zacchaeus is not well liked by the people. Tax collectors were suspected of taking money from people so that they could enrich themselves. In the passage today, Zacchaeus is so determined to see Jesus that he climbs a tree in order to see him over the crowd. But the important part of the story is that Jesus sees him. "Come on down," Jesus calls out, "I am coming to your home." The religious leaders and the crowd react with disapproval.

Today's Gospel passage shows how people can prejudge others. The people despise Zacchaeus, but Jesus sees the truth. Jesus sees and draws out the hidden goodness in Zacchaeus.

## **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- What helps remind you that God is forgiving?
- Do you try to see goodness in others?
- Do you recognize the goodness in yourself?

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



## **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

### **Justification**

The Catholic Church teaches that justification is God's saving action in Jesus by the Holy Spirit that frees us from sin and renews us. Those who are justified are cleansed from sin and put in a right relationship with God. For us believers this happens in the gift of baptism (CCC 1987). In the saving waters of baptism sins are cleansed and we are made new. God alone saves and justifies us. God's saving action is celebrated in the sacraments.

Our Catholic understanding is that we can cooperate with God's grace and be renewed. It is possible to grow in holiness as we practice good works. In the story of Zacchaeus we find someone who cooperates with God's grace and grows in holiness. Jesus sees that Zacchaeus is on the path of goodness.

Zacchaeus is an example of one who is justified. Justification heals us and frees us from sin. It puts us right with God.



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- What sacraments celebrate God's forgiveness?
  - How can you stay on the path of goodness?
  - What helps your relationship with God to grow?

# The Gospel in Life

This week try to find goodness in others and let others see the goodness in you.

## Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 1

Grade 4, chapter 4

Grade 5, chapter 20

Grade 6, chapter 1

