



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Sirach 15: 15-20

Psalms 119: 1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

1 Corinthians 2: 6-10

Matthew 5: 17-37

### Opening Prayer

O God,  
you create us  
in your own image,  
and give us freedom  
to choose good or evil  
in thought, word and deed.  
May we always  
look to your Son, Jesus,  
and the path he illuminates  
toward true life  
and union with you.



### Life Reflection

God places before us a choice between life and death. By choosing the good, we embrace life. By choosing evil we embrace death. God's commandments guide us toward the good.

### Listening to the Word of God

Read Sirach 15: 15-20

Allow for silence

### Scripture Background

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



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God's wisdom has been established from the beginning. The Holy Spirit energizes the believer. By the grace of God's love, the Spirit illumines and reveals that wisdom to us.

Moses received the Commandments from God. In the person of Jesus, the Mosaic Law is fulfilled. We have a new teacher, the Lord, who instills within us the New Law, the Law of Love.

### **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- *Are all laws of equal importance? Why or why not? What are some examples?*
- *What determinse the importance of laws?*
- *What are the consequences of following or not following the laws?*
- *Do consequences only matter if one is caught breaking the law?*

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

## **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**



### ***Freedom: A Gift to Be Used Wisely***

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God gives human beings freedom to choose how to act. We have the capacity to decide for or against something. We can engage in specific actions and be responsible for them. Free will is the mechanism by which we grow and mature in truth and goodness. When our free will is disciplined for the Kingdom of God, we can achieve a blessedness of life.

It is possible, however, that a person exercising free will in a given situation ends up choosing evil rather than good, and therefore sins. The sin of Adam and Eve is the prime Scriptural image of humanity's failure to use free will according to the plan of God. Human history is replete with examples of individuals and groups who chose evil and sinfulness again and again, which has led to all sorts of diabolical situations and wretched outcomes.

Contemporary culture extols freedom, at times idolizing it as if it is the highest value and goal of human life. It is definitely something to be valued and cherished. But it is not the endpoint of our existence. God is. When human beings do whatever they like, without reference to God and his kingdom, humanity easily becomes self-centered and disfigured by sin.



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### **The Gospel in Life**

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In this Sunday's Gospel account, Jesus invites those who listen to a deep interior conversion of heart and mind. Mere exterior conversion of heart and mind, mere exterior compliance with the law of Moses is not sufficient. Interior compliance to do what is good is found in the heart. Love is the basis for good actions. Jesus teaches us to exercise our free will responsibly. In this sense love is the heart of God's law.

