



a Kendall Hunt Company

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session, read all the readings.

1 Kings 19:9, 11-13

Psalm 85:9, 10, 11-12, 13-14

Romans 9:1-5

Matthew 14:22-33

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Is there a particular reading that appeals to you? Is there a word or image that engages you?

RCL Benziger
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Read the following **Word in Liturgy** and **Catholic Doctrine** sections. 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.

The Word In Liturgy

The story of Elijah's encounter with God on Horeb (an alternative name for Sinai) is part of a larger cycle of stories about the prophet that begins with chapter 17. The heart of the story is its description of how God's presence is known. Rather than the cosmic displays that have been a standard feature of the theophany (wind, earthquake, flashes of fiery light), God's presence is revealed in what our translation calls "a tiny whispering sound" (v. 12), an enigmatic phrase which indicates the paradox of something heard within silence. The nature of this prophet's encounter with God opens up a whole new understanding of how the divine

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presence may be experienced and known.

In today's gospel, Matthew has taken material from Mark and reworked it into a sermon for the church of his day. It would have been quite easy for the disciples in Matthew's community, already facing the storms of persecution, to recognize themselves in the disciples in the storm-tossed boat. In the dark of that stormy night, the person of Jesus is revealed as the cosmic Lord, able to subdue the forces of chaos represented by the raging sea. In Peter's walk on the water and desperate grasp of Jesus' hand, Matthew presents a stunning image of how important it is to reach out in faith to Jesus. Subsequent Church teaching (cf. CCC 142-43) would describe faith as our human response to divine revelation. Matthew puts into powerful imagery that same truth, presenting the person of Jesus as the revelation or epiphany of God, and showing that faith is above all a relationship to the divine Word revealed in the human flesh of Jesus.

Catholic Doctrine Revelation



The English term "revelation" derives from the Latin *revelare*, that is, "to remove the veil." The root of the word itself indicates that revelation makes known to us something that had been obscure or unknown. Revelation is an uncovering or an illumination. Classically, revelation meant a divine teaching or instruction.

All of this, however, is a limited description of what the Church means by revelation. A fuller description must refer to the personal nature of that which is being revealed, that is, God. The Catholic understanding of revelation makes reference to the way in which God reveals God's self to the world, the gift of God's own being which is revealed, and a relationship of meaning that provides an ultimate grounding for our being and our world (CCC 54).

Because Christ is the fullness of God's self-revelation there will be no new self-disclosure from heaven in the future. The relationship that is made possible for us in Christ with the divine will not be added to or improved upon in any new, public way (CCC 66). A key word

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here is “public,” which the Church contrasts to private revelation. At certain times in Christian history there have been private revelations that assist living out the faith, but these private revelations do not add anything substantial to the deposit of faith and must be judged by the teaching authority of the Church to be authentically from Christ or the saints. Thus, the Catholic Church believes that no revelation whatsoever since the person of Jesus can ever correct or surpass what has been given to us in the Christ event (CCC 67).

To understand, as Catholics do, that the fullness of revelation is encompassed by Jesus who is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) does not mean that the self-disclosure of God to us is not sometimes obscure or mysterious (CCC 157). Thus, what has been revealed and how that forms our faith is certain, but human language and thought may struggle to express and articulate what is known of the divine in the relationship of love communicated by God’s self-disclosure.

The result of divine revelation is that we live now within the promise of God. Human life has as its goal the ultimate union with God who has loved us so much that the divine reaches out to us and communicates. A relationship is established that puts before us a future filled with justice, hope, love, and the vindication of faith. The eternal Word, Jesus Christ, who opens this avenue of promise, is experienced in the proclamation and study of sacred scripture, in the body of believers, the Church, and in the living Tradition that is handed on by the Church from age to age.