



a Kendall Hunt Company

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Matthew 16:21-27

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus,

by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.

You are the Savior of the world.

Give us the courage to carry our crosses.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is the cross in the life of the disciple. To begin, cut out a large cross from a sheet of white poster paper and hang it in front of the room. Brainstorm with the young people what hardships they face as followers of Jesus and write down their responses on the cross. Discuss.

- How do you live as a follower of Jesus?
- What crosses do you face at home and in school?

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- What does the symbol of the cross tell us about new life? _____

Allow time for discussion. The way of the cross is the path to new life. As followers of Jesus we share in Jesus' suffering and resurrection.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from the Old Testament listen to how the prophet Jeremiah remains true to God's call even in the face of suffering.

Read Jeremiah 20:7-9.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why is the prophet Jeremiah crying out to God?
- What is Jeremiah called by God to do?
- How do the people treat Jeremiah?
- Does Jeremiah give up on his mission to speak God's Word?

In the gospel today listen to find out how to become a follower of Jesus.

Read Matthew 16:21-27.

Allow for silence.

- What is going to happen to Jesus?
- How does Peter respond to Jesus?
- What does Jesus tell his disciples about how to become one of his followers?

Scripture Background

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

In the Old Testament reading today, Jeremiah accepts God's call to proclaim God's word. The prophet challenges the leaders and people of his time to live as God's people. The people do not want to hear what Jeremiah has to say. He is met with resistance, rejection, and outright persecution. Jeremiah is beaten and thrown into a sewer to die. Jeremiah cries out in anguish to God. He boldly tells God that he has had enough. But with all his suffering, Jeremiah is unable to keep God's Word silent.



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In today's gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that he must suffer and die. Jesus tells his friends that his suffering and death will lead to new life. Peter does not like what he hears. He does not understand about the events to come.

Then Jesus tells his disciples that they too will have a cross to bear. This passage tells that anyone who wishes to follow Jesus must deny his very self, take up his cross, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus. And in the final judgment, Jesus promises everlasting reward for those who remain faithful to him.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Do you ever have second thoughts about doing the right thing?
- What helps you to keep going in the midst of suffering?
- How can Jesus help you carry your crosses?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starter

The Cross in the Life of the Disciple

As followers of Jesus we are called to follow his example and accept a share in the cross. The cross, an ancient method of suffering and death is also a sign of victory over death and new life for the Christian.

Suffering is part of life. Our faith tells us that when we suffer we can find strength in the power of God who lifted Jesus from the cross. John Paul II writes about Jesus who takes our suffering and changes it to strength. Jesus keeps those who are hurting close to him.

Catholics believe that through the experience of suffering and the cross we are led into the kingdom of God. The Paschal Mystery consists of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. Through suffering and death there is the resurrection. In the Paschal Mystery of Christ, we believe that God has taken death upon the cross and turned it into our salvation.

- How do followers of Jesus accept a share of the cross?
- Why is the cross a symbol of hope?
- What is the Paschal Mystery?

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Sacrament Connection

In the sacrament of Confirmation the Holy Spirit strengthens us to live as disciples of Jesus. Living as a follower of Jesus can be difficult at times. The gifts of the Holy Spirit give us the courage and strength we need to carry our crosses and continue the mission of Jesus on earth.

The Gospel in Life

Ask Jesus to help you carry your crosses this week?

