



a Kendall Hunt Company

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



Intermediate Session

Sirach 27:30-28:7

Matthew 18:21-35

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Forgiving God, we ask your forgiveness for the times we have hurt you and one another.

Thank you for loving us and calling us to love each other.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.



Opening Life Reflection

The topic for today is forgiveness. To begin write the word "SORRY" in large letters on a sheet of poster paper. Invite the children to brainstorm all the words that they use when they ask for forgiveness. Write down their responses. Discuss:

- When do you need forgiveness?
- How does it feel to be forgiven?
- When do you need to forgive others?

Allow time for discussion. God helps us to change and grow. We can help others to change and grow. God wants us all to live as members of his family.



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Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading today listen to what Sirach tells the people about forgiveness.

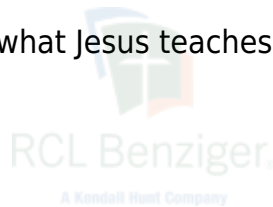
Read Sirach 27:30-28:7.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does Sirach tell the people about forgiveness?
- What will happen to those who hold on to anger?
- Why does Sirach tell the people to be forgiving?

In the gospel today listen to find out what Jesus teaches his followers about forgiveness.



Read Matthew 18:21-35.

Allow for silence.

- What does Jesus teach his followers about forgiveness?
- What story does Jesus tell?
- How does the king treat the slave who owes him a debt?
- How does the slave treat his fellow slaves?
- What does Jesus' story teach about God?



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

Today's first reading is part of the wisdom books found in the Old Testament. These writings show how those who are wise can live in harmony with God's plan for the world. Sirach wants to convince his people to rely on God's ways. He teaches about a God whose forgiveness has no limits. Sirach tells his people about the need to forgive others. It is not good to hold on to anger and hatred. Forgiving others allows one to experience God's forgiveness and peace.

In today's gospel Jesus shows his followers that it is important for them to share with others the limitless gift of forgiveness that they themselves have received from God. When Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who hurts him, he understands Jesus' answer. With his answer seventy-seven times, Jesus makes the point that forgiveness should have no limit. Jesus tells the story about a king and an unforgiving slave to teach that we are to forgive one another because God has forgiven us. Today's passage concludes with a stern warning to forgive as God forgives.

Questions for Deeper Reflection



- When do you get angry?
- Why is it important to forgive those who hurt you?
- Why is it important to ask for forgiveness when you do something wrong?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Forgiveness

As human beings we sometimes do things that we know are wrong. We choose to turn away from loving God, others and ourselves. When we do these things we sin. God is forgiving. As believers we confess our sinfulness to God and to one another. When we do this, we experience the mercy and forgiveness of God. Jesus commanded us to forgive one another as God has forgiven us.



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We are to forgive those who hurt us. This can be difficult at times. We may feel anger toward the people who harm us. Jesus taught his followers to forgive and love their enemies. Jesus prayed for his enemies at the time of his suffering and death. Catholics are called to follow the example of Jesus Christ.

The Church teaches that when we forgive those who wrong us we are brought closer to Jesus. In the prayer that Jesus taught us we ask the Father to "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. When we truly pray this prayer and meditate on the words, God plants the gifts of compassion, gratitude and love within us. The path of forgiveness proves that love is stronger than sin.

- Is God a forgiving God?
- When do you experience the forgiveness of God?
- What sacrament celebrates God's forgiving love?

Sacrament Connection

In the sacrament of reconciliation we celebrate God's forgiving love. We confess our sins and say that we are sorry. We confess our sins to a priest, who represents the believing community. We are reconciled with God and the believing community.

The Gospel in Life

This week pray for someone who has hurt you.

