



a Kendall Hunt Company

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



Intermediate Session

Isaiah 55:6-9

Matthew 20:1-16

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

God of kindness and mercy, when we go astray, you always welcome us back to you.

Help us to remember your unconditional love.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.



Opening Life Reflection

The topic for today is the sacrament of Penance. To begin, invite the children to write a prayer asking God for forgiveness. On a sheet of poster paper write, "Dear God, I am sorry for..." Provide paper and pencils and invite the children to write their own prayer of sorrow by completing that statement. Explain that they will not need to share what they have written with anyone. Discuss:

- How do you show love for others?
- How can we hurt others with our words and actions?
- How do you ask for forgiveness?

Allow time for discussion. We can hurt others with our words and actions. God calls us to say

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we are sorry and try to do better. The sacrament of Reconciliation is a way of asking God for forgiveness.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading, hear what the prophet Isaiah tells the people about asking God's forgiveness.

Read Isaiah 55:6-9.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does Isaiah tell the people about asking God for forgiveness?
- What will happen to those who return to God?
- How is God's love described?



In the gospel today, listen to find out why Jesus tells a story about workers in vineyard.

Read Matthew 20:1-16.

Allow for silence.

- Who does the landowner hire to work in his vineyard?
- Why do some workers feel like they have been treated unfairly?
- Why does Jesus tell the story about workers in the vineyard?
- What does Jesus teach about God in the story?



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Scripture Background

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

In the first reading from the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah proclaims the glory of God's forgiveness. God's ways are hard for the people to understand. Isaiah urges the people to turn from their wicked ways and return to the Lord for mercy and forgiveness. In today's passage the message is clear. Do not waste any time. Seek the Lord now and you will find a God of limitless love and mercy.

In today's gospel, Jesus tells a story about workers in a vineyard. Like many of Jesus' parables, the story ends with a twist to help the listener look at reality in a new way. Jesus called this reality the reign of God.

The landowner in today's parable pays a full day's wage to all his workers, even those who only work for part of the day. This makes some of the workers upset because they think that they should get more. Jesus' parable teaches that God's generosity and unconditional love is extended to all people. The people of Jesus' time found it hard to understand that prostitutes and tax collectors should receive forgiveness without earning it. Today's parable shows that everyone gets what he or she needs to survive because of the owner's compassion, not because they have earned it.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What do today's readings teach about God's forgiveness?
- Why does God's love reach out to all people?
- Is God's idea of fairness different from ours?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Sacrament of Penance

God's love is unconditional. God's love is constant. From this great love flows the forgiveness of sins. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus open for us the doors to a new and healed

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life. We are born into this new life at baptism. The Church does not re-baptize those who sin after baptism. Instead, Catholics experience the forgiveness of God in the sacrament of reconciliation.

When we sin, we do things that hurt our friendship with God and with others. In the sacrament of reconciliation we reconcile with God and one another. God always loves us and offers forgiveness. When we are sorry for our sins, we are led by God to be reconciled.

Catholics believe there are four parts to the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation. First the believer expresses love for God and true sorrow for sin. Second, the sins are confessed. This is done individually to a priest. The priest acts in the name of Jesus. Third, the harm that is done must be repaired. This is known as penance. Fourth, the priest extends his hands over the head of the believer in blessing and prays for forgiveness. This prayer of absolution expresses that it is God alone who forgives and reconciles the sinner back to God and to the Church. Through the sacrament of reconciliation we receive the strength to live faithfully as God's children.

- What is unconditional love?
- Who are the people in your life who show you God's unconditional love?
- What happens when we ask God for forgiveness?

Sacrament Connection

The sacrament of reconciliation restores us to the relationship of love with God we entered into at Baptism. When we celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation we return to God and to the Church community.

The Gospel in Life

This week write a prayer to thank God for forgiving your sins.