



a Kendall Hunt Company

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Numbers 11:25-29

Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Creator God, You have made us in your own image and likeness.

Help us to accept our value as human beings because

We know all people are loved and valued in your sight.

Help us to treat one another with value and respect.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Allow time for discussion:

- Have you ever tried out for a particular sport and not made the team? How did it feel?
- Have you ever been chosen to be a member of a team that you tried out for? How did it feel?
- Do groups or cliques exist at your school?
- What is your impression of groups or cliques?

Summarize with the idea that it is important to feel as if we belong and it hurts to be rejected. Yet throughout our lives we witness people being divided into groups. Jesus had a very hard time with elitism. He did not want his disciples to be concerned with who fit in and who didn't. God created all human beings with equal dignity and value. Jesus worked hard to make all people feel welcome and accepted.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament we hear that the Spirit of God is given according to God's will.

Read Numbers 11:25-29.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What were the elders given by God?
- Why did Moses' assistant want to stop them from doing God's work?

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- How did Moses respond?

- Why did Moses ask his assistant if he was jealous?

In today's gospel Jesus keeps his disciples from putting a stop to other followers who are using Jesus' name to do good works.

Read Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48.

Allow for silence.

- What did John tell Jesus that he saw?
- Why did the disciples want to stop the person who was doing good works?
- Why didn't Jesus want the person stopped?
- How does Jesus warn his disciples against sin in this reading?

Scripture Background

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

In today's Old Testament reading the Spirit of God rests wherever God wills. We get the impression that God's grace is not earned but freely given. In this reading we hear that God places the Spirit on seventy elders. When the Spirit was placed upon them they prophesied. God knew that Moses alone could not meet all the needs of the Israelite people. In order to help Moses, God shares the Spirit with others. But Moses' assistant Joshua is concerned about other people receiving the gifts of the spirit outside of the people who were present when they were originally given. Moses has a more generous view. He responds to Joshua by assuring him of how great it would be if the Spirit of God were to rest upon all the people of the Lord. This passage makes clear that God's grace can never be completely limited or subject to control.

In the gospel today Jesus does not tolerate the formation of an elite group of followers who exclude others. We hear that John is concerned about a person who is not part of the original group of followers because he is casting out demons in the name of Jesus. Jesus forcefully lets his disciple know that the person who is doing good works in Jesus' name should not be stopped. It is clear that Jesus accepts anyone who helps the disciples in the course of fulfilling their mission.

Sin can cut us off from God. In the gospel we hear that whatever causes us to sin should be eliminated. The point made here is that there is nothing worse than being cut off from our



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creator due to sin. Jesus is not advocating self-mutilation, but he uses harsh examples to make the point that sin separates us from God.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Do you know of any groups that exclude people?
- What message does Jesus give us today about forming groups that leave certain people out?
- We hear about a hand, foot and eye in this reading. What gets in the way of your relationship with God?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Catholic Social Teaching

Catholics believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, we are to treat people with dignity and respect. That goes for us as well. Each of us has been created as a beloved child of God and therefore we should value ourselves—mind, body and soul. Because every person is created equal in the sight of God, we ought to view all people as equal in worth and value.

The vision of social justice for Catholics includes the value of human work. We believe that as people created in God's image, we go on with God to finish the work of creation by helping to provide for human needs. We believe that the ability to work should be available to everyone. This includes men and women, healthy and disabled, natives and immigrants. Society should assist individuals in finding work without discrimination.

Catholic Social Teaching makes clear that we are not created alone but together. We are a community and by working together the people of God help to make God's presence known throughout the world.

- Do you feel that all people are treated equally in your school and community?
- Where does discrimination exist in our society?
- What can you do to break down the barriers of discrimination?
- How can you be more accepting of people's differences?

The Gospel in Life

This week, make it a point to welcome someone who is feeling left out.

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