



a Kendall Hunt Company

First Sunday of Lent, Year B, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Genesis 9:8-15

Mark 1:12-15

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God,

As we begin the season of Lent, help us to examine our lives.

Give us the strength to live as messengers of your love.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The main topic for today is Baptismal Covenant. To begin, invite the young people to stand together and form a circle. Explain that a circle can represent the unending love that God has for us. Have the young people reflect on how they can be messengers of God's love during the season of Lent. Invite each person to share his or her response with the large group as you go around the circle. Discuss:

- How would you describe love that is everlasting?



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- Where do you find signs of God's love? _____
- How can you be more aware of God's love for you this season of Lent?

Allow time for discussion. God's love for us is everlasting. God invites us into friendship again and again, no matter how many times we turn away.

Listening to the Word of God

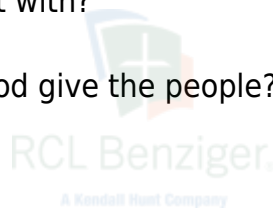
In the Old Testament reading, listen to how the people are given a sign of God's unending love.

Read Genesis 9:8-15.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Who does God establish a covenant with?
- What sign of unending love does God give the people?
- What does God promise?



In the gospel today listen to find out what happens when Jesus goes into the wilderness.

Read Mark 1:12-15.

Allow for silence.

- How long is Jesus in the wilderness?
- What happens to Jesus in the wilderness?
- After Jesus' time in the wilderness, what does he proclaim to the people?

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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 the people are given a glorious sign of God's unending love. The story of Noah and the flood shows the sinfulness of all of creation. God's judgment comes upon everyone and everything. Like the forty days of Lent, forty days of flooding rains are needed to purify the earth. In this passage, Noah, his family, and every living creature leave the ark and experience a wondrous sign of God's faithful love. The rainbow is a sign of the covenant that God makes between Noah, every living creature, and all future generations. God promises that a flood shall never again destroy the earth.

Today's gospel gives us a short account of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness. Mark's account of the temptation of Jesus is brief because in Mark's gospel the temptation of Jesus and his struggle against Satan continue throughout his public ministry. The forty days that Jesus spends in the wilderness with the wild beasts is transformed by God's blessing. The Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness and the angels are sent to help him. Jesus comes back from the desert ready to start his public ministry. He urgently proclaims his message to the people—repent and believe in the good news.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What are some signs from nature that show God's love for creation?
- How can we show respect and care for all of creation?
- When are you tempted to turn away from God?
- How does the Spirit guide you?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starter

Baptismal Covenant

The covenant between God and God's people is everlasting. Throughout sacred history God has kept the promise of unending love for us. God reaches out to us in friendship and love and invites people into a relationship, again and again saving them, no matter how many



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times they turn away or forget.

In response to God's invitation, we are called to love God in return. Christians enter into a committed relationship with God in Christ, through the sacrament of baptism. By baptism we are reborn. This rebirth takes place in water. The believer is plunged into Christ's death. Rising from baptismal waters, the Spirit claims for us a share in the resurrection and we are made a new creation (CCC 1214).

Through baptism we become part of the people of God and are called to live a life "worthy of the gospel," rejecting sin and living by faith. Baptism joins us to Christ and his Church, calling us into mission. Baptism calls us to live as children of God. Our baptism challenges us to live lives of witness and service. We are called to be Christ for one another, to forgive and be peacemakers.

- What do you understand about your baptism?
- How can you respond to God's invitation to friendship?
- How do you live your baptismal commitment today?

Sacrament Connection

Through the sacrament of Baptism we are reborn. This rebirth takes place in water. Rising from baptismal waters, the Spirit claims for us a share in the resurrection and we are made a new creation. Through baptism we become part of the people of God, are joined to Christ and his Church.

The Gospel in Life

How can you be Christ for others at home and in school this week?