



a Kendall Hunt Company

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for the session, read all the readings:

Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24

Psalms 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11, 12, 13

2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15

Mark 5:21-43 [or (short form) 5:21-24, 35b-43]

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading which appealed to you? Was there a word or image that engaged you?

Read the Word in Liturgy and Catholic Doctrine sections. These give you background on what you will be doing this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need for the session.

The Word In Liturgy

Today's reading from the Book of Wisdom offers an excellent entrée into our doctrinal focus on the Church's teaching about the "seamless garment" of respect for human life that characterizes our Catholic tradition. The reflections of the sage who authored today's passage are rooted in the stories of creation and fall in the Book of Genesis. There, God is shown to be the author of all life. Behind our Catholic insistence on the value of every human life is the Church's moral concern over attitudes, values, and behaviors destructive of life, that is, what Pope John Paul II has called the "culture of death."

Today, using his familiar technique of a story within a story, Mark shows that Jesus can cure both disease (the woman's "incurable" hemorrhage) and death. As is frequently the case, the two stories help to interpret each other: there is a social stigma attached to both recipients of Jesus' miracles. The woman with the flow of blood is ritually "unclean" and thus an outcast from family, friends, and worshiping community; the girl, a corpse by the time Jesus arrives, would also defile anyone who touched her ("He took the child by the hand..."). Jesus cures not just the physical conditions that afflict us, but also the social conditions that can cause even more suffering. What Mark is highlighting in this passage is relevant to a Church that insists on the value of every human life, especially those who are considered "outcast" and worthless in the eyes of society.

Catholic Doctrine

Sanctity of Human Life

Catholics treat human life as holy. We believe every human life is sacred because "from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim...the right directly to



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destroy an innocent human being.”

Our communitarian vocation is thus a basis for teaching on a host of related topics, such as our interdependence, the common good, respect for the human person, equality and justice, and the need to transcend an individualistic morality. This comprehensive perspective, in turn, protects the most vulnerable among us, that is, the unborn, the newly born, the aged, and the sick. Believers choose to shield the weak from those who are strong in society. Therefore, abortion, infanticide, suicide, and euthanasia are not options for believers and are viewed as gravely sinful. These prohibitions stem from the consistent application of Church teaching that acclaims God as the author of all life and that we creatures cannot act as if we were the authors of human life.

