



a Kendall Hunt Company

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



Catechetical Background and Preparation

To prepare for the session, read all the readings:

Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

Psalm 78:3-4, 23-24, 25, 54

Ephesians 4:17, 20-24

John 6:24-35

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading that 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 in 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 First Reading develops a recurring theme found in the Book of Exodus: again and again the people complain about God, but the Lord continually forgives their grumbling and graciously cares for them. The people grumble because they believe they are lost, but God has not abandoned them. Instead, he sends quail and manna to sustain them and to test their fidelity to follow his instructions. The divine origin of the food in the desert prefigures the Eucharist of Christ Jesus.

In today's Gospel, the crowd asks Jesus three questions, each of which shows just how much they do not understand. They pursue him because they are recipients of his miracle of the loaves and fish, and they want more food with which to fill themselves. In his response to the third question, Jesus interprets Psalm 78:24 and the miracle of the manna in the desert as pointing to himself as the Bread of God—"For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (John 6:33).

Saint Paul, in the Second Reading, urges the Ephesians to "clothe yourselves with the new self" (Ephesians 4:24), a reminder to all Christians that Baptism initiates us into a profound renewal; a conversion of mind, heart, and action according to the truth of Christ.

Catholic Doctrine Eucharist

The origin of the Eucharist resides in the action and command of Jesus, who instituted this Sacrament at the Last Supper. He took bread and wine and identified them as his own Body and Blood. The Lord shared this meal with his Apostles. Furthermore, he commanded them to



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celebrate it as a memorial of his saving Death and Resurrection.

When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, he gave a unique and definitive significance to the former use of bread and wine. He shows himself to be the High Priest of the new Covenant, willingly undergoing suffering and death and offering himself as a sacrifice for our sakes. By his Death and Resurrection, Jesus passes over to his Father. He is the new Passover. This significance is anticipated by the Last Supper and is made present anew each time the Eucharist is celebrated. Therefore, this Sacrament truly is the source and summit of the Christian life, for in it, by faith, we receive the Lord himself.

The Eucharist contains the whole spiritual good of the church, for we receive Christ himself in it. It is such a rich treasure that there are multiple descriptions for this Sacrament:

- **Holy Sacrifice of the Mass**

It completes and surpasses the sacrifice of the old Covenant.

- **Breaking of the Bread**

This is the ritual action Jesus used at the Last Supper to institute this Sacrament.

- **The Lord's Supper**

The final meal which Jesus partook with his disciples, the Passover Meal, anticipates the wedding feast of the heavenly kingdom.

- **Holy Communion**

We unite ourselves to Christ, who enables us to share in his Body and Blood.

