



a Kendall Hunt Company

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



Intermediate Session

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, you gently urge us to walk in the light of your ways.

Help us to follow your path of goodness.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Today we discover that God's Law was given to us so that we might live in harmony with all of creation. Begin by inviting the children to brainstorm what rules or laws they abide by in their daily lives.

- List some of the rules you follow at school.
- List some of the rules you follow at home.
- Why do these rules exist?
- How do rules and laws benefit society?
- Our church gives what rules or laws to us?



Allow time for the children to discuss what rules and laws they find unreasonable as well as what rules and laws give them a sense of security. Introduce that God has given us commands to follow so that we can live good lives.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading listen to how the people are urged to keep the commands given to them by God.

Read Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why does God give the people laws to observe?
- How do they help the people?
- What do the people think of God's laws?

In the gospel listen to what Jesus says about following God's Law within our hearts.

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Read Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23.

Allow for silence.

- Why did the Pharisees criticize the disciples?
- How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees?
- Why does Jesus warn his followers against following laws too rigidly?

Scripture Background

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

In the time of the Old Testament, the Chosen People had a very positive view of God's Laws. They viewed God's commands as a gift to help them live full and happy lives. Following God's law helped the people remain close to God. In today's reading from the Old Testament, Israel is asked to listen and obey specific decrees given to them by God. The benefits of doing so include the blessing of life in the Promised Land.

As time went on over the centuries, more specific laws were added to the original commandments given by God. In the gospel today, Jesus is unhappy with the Pharisees for rigidly following these laws. Jesus warns them against being concerned with the outward observance of laws without paying attention to what is within one's heart. When the Pharisees criticize the disciples for not keeping the laws of the tradition, Jesus calls them hypocrites.

Jesus encourages his followers not to be concerned with following laws outwardly, but to look within their hearts, because that is where good or evil comes from.

In today's gospel we learn that it is important for our actions to reflect our beliefs. Jesus warns against observing laws only for the sake of appearance. Instead we are encouraged to look within our hearts to see how well we love one another.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What did you learn about following God's Law from these readings?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Principles of Morality

Living a moral life does not simply mean to observe rules and laws, or to rely only on our feelings. Catholics understand that trying to live morally entails looking within our hearts and

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depending on an informed conscience. Our conscience is informed by the preaching of Christ and the Church, good religious education, an understanding of scripture, spiritual guidance, and the example of other believers.

Our ability to live morally and in harmony with God increases over a lifetime. For Christians a moral life is directed by the example of Jesus. Through our friendship with Jesus, the desire to be like him increases. Our relationship with Jesus helps guide us toward a life that is directed by God's Law.

- Make a list of the ways that you keep your conscience informed. For example, attending religious education classes, reading the bible, etc.

The Gospel in Life

Faith in Jesus helps us to live a moral life. When we admire a person, we want to follow their example. It is the same with Jesus. As we get to know Jesus better, we grow in the desire to follow him and follow his example.

- What can you do this week to help you get to know Jesus better?

