



a Kendall Hunt Company

Junior High: Solemnity of All Saints - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

Matthew 5:1-12

Opening Prayer

Let us Pray.

Gracious God,

We depend on your grace and kindness even though we sometimes think we can do just fine on our own. Help us recognize that we truly are poor and broken in spirit. Humble us enough to receive your great love, and allow us to truly hunger for a life with you. Help us always be faithful to you and to work for peace here on earth, that we might begin to bring about your kingdom. In the name of Jesus, who lives with you, Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Rewrite the beatitudes to reflect situations in today's world. Rename the poor in spirit, the meek, those who mourn, hunger and thirst. Who are the clean of heart, the peacemakers and the persecuted. What will the rewards for each be?

- How are you meek and poor in spirit?
- For what do you mourn, hunger, or thirst?
- What do you do to bring about peace in your home or community?

Post your rewritten beatitudes in a place where you can be reminded daily of your own role in living this gospel message.

Listening to the Word of God

John has a vision of a crowd too large to count in this reading from Revelation. The crowd is made up of the servants of God, and they are gathered around God's throne.

Read Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why does John say that the crowd was too large to count? Why would that be important?
- Why is the clothing of the servants significant in this reading?
- Why do you think John calls Jesus the "Lamb of God"?

This gospel, often referred to as "The Sermon On the Mount," describes a way for the people to live so that they might be part of the kingdom of God.



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Read Matthew 5:1-12

Allow for silence.

- What is so unusual about Jesus' words to the people in the crowd?
- Where in your own life have you seen examples of these beatitudes?
- What does Jesus promise us if we live according to these words?

Scripture Background

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

A very large crowd of people have gathered around the throne of God according to John in The Book of Revelation. Jesus, the Lamb of God stands by the throne. An angel places the seal of God on the forehead of God's servants which will provide protection for them at the time of judgment. Everyone in the crowd wears a white robe which signifies that they have been washed clean by the blood of the Lamb. They wave palm branches that symbolize their victory over evil and their thankfulness to God. We understand that the people of this great crowd are those who were faithful to God in their lives and will now spend eternity with God.

In this well known scripture passage, often called "The Sermon on the Mount" Jesus explains how we are to live in order to be part of God's kingdom. His words are quite the opposite of what people think. In the culture of Jesus' day and in our day still, greatness was acquired through wealth and power. Rich, strong, and powerful people were usually the leaders. According to Jesus the truth is quite the contrary. If we are to be great in the kingdom of God, we must be humble. It will be the poor, the weak, and the lowly who will live forever with God.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Who are the poor, weak and powerless in our world today that Jesus might be thinking of in this passage?
- How have we seen others care for the poor and weak? What can we do from their example?
- What one beatitude do you need to improve in your own life?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The Communion of Saints

As Christians we are all one Body in Christ. The Second Vatican Council declared that we are all called to a life of holiness. Through a formal process of canonization, some people in the Body of Christ are recognized as especially holy. These Saints are our companions in prayer. They are patrons of groups of people and they serve as models for how we will live. However, we are all called to this same holiness and are challenged to witness God's Kingdom through

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our own actions and words. On All Saints Day, we celebrate the lives of the many people who influenced our lives and serve as models for us. They may be living or dead. They may be well-known or known only to us.

- How do saints guide us?
- Why is it important to remember the lives of those who have died?
- What are some things in our lives that hamper our growth in holiness?

Sacrament Connection

In the sacrament of Eucharist, we all approach the banquet table together. In a continuous procession we come as the Body of Christ and gather in communion around the table. When we prepare to receive the sacrament, we honestly state that we are unworthy, but really want to try to live as God wants us to; indeed, as we are instructed in the beatitudes of today's gospel. In the Eucharist, we become one with Jesus and join with one another in taking the love of Jesus into the world even as we leave the building of the church.

The Gospel in Life

Look again at the beatitudes in today's gospel. Select the one that needs the most attention in your life and practice living it this week.

