Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary

Intermediate Session
Hosea 6:3-6
Matthew 9:9-13

Opening Prayer
Let us pray.
Loving God,
thank you for the gift of grace that helps us to live as your children.
Help us to live our faith at home, in school, and with our friends.
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.
Amen.

Opening Life Reflection
The theme for today is grace. To begin, provide objects from nature such as a flower, rock, leaf, tree branch, water, shell, etc. Put the objects in the center of the meeting space and invite the children to choose a symbol from nature that helps remind them of God's life and love. Invite the children to share with the group how the symbol they chose shows God's presence. Discuss:
• How does nature help to show us God's life and love?
• When are you most aware of God's loving presence?
• What is grace?

Allow time for discussion. Grace is the free gift of God's life and love. God's loving presence is with us throughout our daily lives.

Listening to the Word of God
In the Old Testament reading listen to how God's love is with the people of Israel.

Read Hosea 6:3-6.
Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters
• How do the people of Israel show their love for God?
• What does the prophet tell the people about the way they worship?
• How is God's loving presence with the people of Israel?

In today's gospel listen to how Jesus freely gives his love.

Read Matthew 9:9-13.
Allow for silence.

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• Who does Jesus eat with?
• How do the Pharisees react when they discover Jesus eating with sinners?
• What does Jesus tell the others?

Scripture Background

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

In today's first reading from the Old Testament, the prophet Hosea reprimands Israel for its infidelity to the covenant with Yahweh. The people offer prayers for deliverance, yet their rituals are empty and their hearts are not with God. The prophet condemns such worship by announcing Yahweh's reply: "Your piety is like a morning cloud, like the dew that early passes away."

Today's gospel shows that God's love is freely given. Matthew the tax collector does nothing to earn the love that is shown to him by the Lord. Even before Matthew has repented of his sins and without any guarantee that he will change his ways, Matthew is loved by Jesus and called to follow him. The Pharisees are shocked and outraged when they learn that Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus responds, "People who are in good health do not need a doctor; sick people do." Jesus proclaims that he has come to offer the gift of grace to all those who are in need of it.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

• What message does the prophet give to Israel?
• Why does Jesus show love for Matthew even though he is a sinner?
• Who has Jesus come to help?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters
Grace

The gift of God's love and kindness is given to all of humanity. Grace is the gift of God's life and love.

The Church believes that through Baptism we receive the gift of God's life and love. We call this gift sanctifying grace. Through sanctifying grace we are made holy and sin is forgiven. We believe that God is present with us helping us to live as God's children. The Church understands this grace to be actual grace.

God has created us to share in the life of the Holy Trinity here on earth and to receive eternal life. The gift of grace enables us to share in the life of God.

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- How does the gift of grace help us to live as God's children?
- What does the Church believe about grace?
- Who is given the gift of grace?

The Gospel in Life

How can the gift of God's grace help you to make good and loving choices this week?