



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session, read all the readings.

2 Kings 4:8 - 11, 14 - 16

Psalms 89:2 - 3, 16 - 17, 18 - 19

Romans 6:3 - 4, 8 - 11

Matthew 10:37 - 42

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Is there a particular reading that appeals to you? Is there a word or image that engages you?

Read the following **Word in Liturgy** and **Catholic Doctrine** sections. 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.

### The Word In Liturgy

Today's first reading from 2 Kings is part of a cycle of stories about the prophet Elisha, disciple and successor to Elijah.

Written around the beginning of the eighth century before Christ, more than a hundred years after Elisha's death, these tales show evidence of the oral tradition that formed and transmitted them and of the concerns of the deuteronomistic editor who incorporated them into his theological history of Israel. They were designed to reinforce a popular awareness of the prophets as instruments of the all-powerful word of Yahweh that was ever ready to reward the good deeds of the people, to rescue them in time of need, and to punish them for their infidelities. The reason for the choice of this pericope is clearly the reference in today's gospel that those who welcome a prophet will receive a prophet's reward.

Today's gospel concludes both the missionary discourse from which we have been reading the past several weeks, as well as book two (8:1 - 10:42) of Matthew's gospel, which dealt with Jesus' ministry and mission in Galilee. Matthew's community had already experienced the cost of discipleship in the form of the very persecutions and rejections alluded to in these verses. Matthew wants his readers to understand that these were not unpredictable aberrations from God's plan. Rather, the cross is for the disciples of Jesus, as for the Master himself, the inevitable consequence of obedience to the Father's will. The final point made is that every disciple represents Jesus and should be treated accordingly, a commonplace Semitic perspective that the disciple embodies the presence and power of the Master.



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## **Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary**

### **Catholic Doctrine**

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#### **Sacrament of Baptism**

We Catholics hold that the celebration of this sacrament is the gateway to the spiritual life, and, as such, its effects can be detailed in a number of ways. To begin with, baptism (along with confirmation and Eucharist) initiates one as a member into the Church. Claimed by Christ in baptism, each initiate is given a share in the priesthood of all believers. Thus, by baptism we belong to one another, a community whose members pour out their lives in service to one another, each using their unique gifts and abilities to build up the whole (CCC 1268 - 69). In addition, because we also believe that the Church is not merely a social collection of individual people but the living, mystical body of Christ, baptism also joins one to the Lord.

While we Catholics believe that faith and baptism are closely linked, and that a first faith is required as evidence before one can go into the life-giving waters, we also affirm that what is being professed and offered in the sacrament is the faith of the Church itself. This is the theological reasoning behind the baptism of infants. Every individual who is baptized, regardless of chronological age, is called to grow in maturity and develop the practice of the faith with the help of the entire household of the faithful (CCC 1253).

Finally, the Catholic Church understands baptism as our incorporation into Christ's mission. Believers step forth from the baptismal font, washed and reborn, indeed, reinvigorated so that they might proclaim the good news of salvation by their words and deeds in every circumstance of life that they will meet.