

Read

1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21

Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8,
9-10, 11

Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Luke 9:51-62

LIVING THE WORD

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 30, 2019



REFLECTION

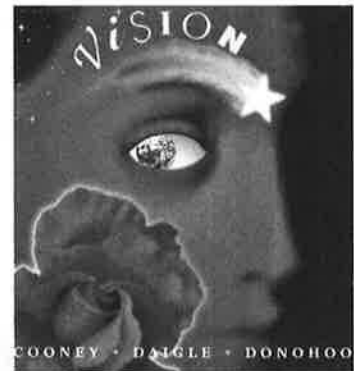
What does it mean to be a disciple? Discipleship demands letting go of attachments, possessions, and even some relationships in order to devote your lives to Christ. We repeatedly hear the word “follow” in today’s First Reading and Gospel. Elisha leaves his work plowing with twelve oxen to follow Elijah as his attendant. It is a vocation story. Jesus and the disciples discuss vocation and discipleship often in the Gospel accounts. The disciples keep thinking they are following Jesus and he throws a few curveballs their way stopping them in their tracks to evaluate their commitment. Their hearts desire to follow Jesus completely yet they are held back by earthly attachments. We would all do better to evaluate these earthly attachments to best enter discipleship with a clean and pure heart.



ACTION

Pray for vocations this week. In fact, pray for your own vocation. Our Church needs good men and women to follow the call to discipleship as vowed religious and priests. There are many wonderful orders to research and learn about who live out specific charisms. There are also diocesan programs for men interested in the priesthood with excellent discernment opportunities. Many teenagers may not consider the religious life as a viable vocation, yet how many have prayed for God’s help in discerning this ultimate discipleship?

The VISION Vocation Network provides helpful resources for discerning your vocation. Visit their website for more information.



<https://vocationnetwork.org/en/>

? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ How might God be calling you to consider your vocation?
- ❖ How do you see yourself as a disciple?



June 30, 2019

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #99C

1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21

Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Luke 9:51-62

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Today's Gospel has a few hard sayings as Jesus is making a point about how much discipleship demands. He is preparing the disciples to understand the total giving the way of the cross will ask of them. Jesus again shows mercy to outsiders by chastising the disciples who want to punish those who don't welcome him. This subtle peacemaking characteristic is highlighted in the life of St. Elizabeth of Portugal, known for peacemaking among quarreling relatives who were also rulers.

Q FOCUS: *Jesus calls us to follow him peacefully and above all other responsibilities.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week is the optional Memorial of St. Elizabeth of Portugal (July 5). Elizabeth was born a princess of Aragon and grew up in a devout family (her aunt and namesake is St. Elizabeth of Hungary). She married the King of Portugal and remained supportive of him despite his betrayals. Later, Elizabeth was able to reconcile her husband and sons from war by physically riding between their rival armies. Her devotion to God and the poor was well known and she entered a monastery after becoming a widow. Elizabeth's life inspires people interested in forging peace between families or nations.

Church Teaching Connection

What the Church teaches "young churches" who are "concerned about their own identity" also applies to young people. "Do not isolate yourself . . . precisely because of the problems that concern you, you need to be in continuous contact with your brothers and sisters in the faith. With every legitimate means, seek to ensure recognition of the freedom to which you have a right, remembering that Christ's disciples must 'obey God rather than men' (Acts 5:29)" (*Redemptoris missio*, 85).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 9:51-62

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

When the days for Jesus' being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him. On the way they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his reception there, but they would not welcome him because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?" Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village.

As they were proceeding on their journey someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus answered him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head."

And to another he said, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their dead. But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." And another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home." To him Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

► Who knows what the phrase "taking something out of context" means? Can you give me an example?

Today's Gospel has a very interesting contextual clue in the first sentence: "When the days for Jesus' being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him." Jerusalem is the final chapter of his earthly ministry, so everything we read should be in light of this fact. It's like when you're reading a book or watching a movie, and there's an unexpected plot twist; you check the number of pages or time left, to see how close the story is to the ending. Here the Gospel is telling us that Jesus is coming to the end of his ministry, and he knows it. Then they enter a Samaritan village.

► What do you know about the Samaritans?

► Can you think of any other Gospel stories that involve them?

Yes, the Good Samaritan is one. That story was so shocking because the Samaritans and Jews were enemy neighbors.

► Does anyone remember the story of the woman at the well?

She met Jesus, became convinced he was the Messiah, and then went back and witnessed to the whole Samaritan town who then began to believe. Both times, Jesus held up Samaritans as capable of acting for Gospel values.

In today's Gospel reading, the Samaritan villagers are not welcoming to Jesus because they learned Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. Two of Jesus' disciples who had been traveling with and learning from him for a while suggested that Jesus rebuke the Samaritans and send down angry flames of fire. James and John are known as the "sons of thunder" for their fiery tempers and here they offer to put it to righteous use. They are outraged that someone would insult Jesus! You can almost hear their indignation and anger: "Don't they know who you are? This is unacceptable! Let's show them, Lord, how powerful we really are." I bet you've heard something like this before.

► Have you ever heard someone become angry with another person because that person insulted God? Have you encountered someone who thinks revenge and retribution are the best course of action or that God would approve of using force or violence? Have you heard someone say that God himself causes violence or retribution?

From your comments and the news on any given day, it's clear this type of thinking happens. Yet look closely at Jesus' reaction. He faces the disciples and rebukes them (see verse 55).

► How do you feel when you are reprimanded or criticized?

► How do you think the disciples felt?

Sometimes when we make mistakes we feel awful. We think that the bigger the mistake was, the more we need to make up for it. Yet Jesus doesn't demand any kind of huge response. He simply, and practically, moves on to the next village (verse 56).

The rest of the Gospel is very vivid and striking in its use of language. Jesus is making an important point to those who want to follow him: being a disciple takes priority over everything. Family or home or livelihood (work and career) duties are extremely important, but even they need to take a backseat to the Gospel. Whatever it is that you value the most (school, success, relationships), whether by choice or responsibility, cannot take priority over following Jesus. We need to trust him completely, put God's will first, and let the rest fall into place. Ideally, the Church provides you with inspiration, resources, and relationships that help you do just that.

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 226.

What people do you consider "Samaritans"—those who believe differently and against whom you want to react against with force? How can you follow Jesus' example from this Gospel?

In what ways do you react when reprimanded? Can you accept Jesus' way of just moving on to the more important things?

How can the Church community at large, and this youth group, help you to put God first in your life?

Act on the Word

Scavenger Hunt

You will need one digital camera or camera phone for each team.

Teens should form groups of three or four people. Each group should have access to a digital camera. Assign each group one to three words. The teens' task is to find and photograph one thing that represents each word. It can be a literal or metaphorical image. Each member of the group should agree to what photo will be used for each word. Here are the words/categories to assign (the words come from today's Gospel):

1. Journey
2. Jerusalem
3. Samaritan
4. Fire from heaven
5. Scolding
6. Follow
7. Foxes
8. Birds
9. Nests
10. Son of Man
11. Follow
12. Bury
13. Proclaim
14. Family
15. Kingdom of God

After teens have finished photographing regather and reread the Gospel. As you read the text and come to a word from the list above the teens should show their photo to the group. (*Note: If you don't have a way to project the images simply pass around the camera*). This reading of the Gospel is in show and tell format. After the Gospel has been read and the teens have shown their photos discuss how the photographs helped them to understand the meaning of the Gospel text.

Closing Prayer

*Heavenly Father,
grant us the wisdom of your Spirit
to gain a sense of identity and mission in Christ,
letting this become the light by which we live
on earth.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.