

Read

Isaiah 53:10-11

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19,
20, 22

Hebrews 4:14-16

Mark 10:35-45 or 10:42-45

LIVING THE WORD

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 21, 2018



REFLECTION

A few years ago, Pope Francis led the Catholic Church in a Jubilee Year of Mercy. Communities all over the world responded to this year by making a pilgrimage or trying to live out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. This effort made the nightly news and penetrated the spirit of World Youth Day in Poland, 2016. The ripple effect ignited the Church to live more fully a life of mercy. Today's readings remind us of the vibrancy of God's mercy. Isaiah reminds us that the Messiah will come to suffer for us and Paul reminds the Hebrews that they should all confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy. In the Gospel, Jesus reminds the Apostles that to live a life of mercy requires that others go before you. Consciously embarking on a continuous journey toward mercy can bring us all closer to Jesus' left or right.



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ How might you be more compassionate toward yourself and others in your life?
- ❖ What does mercy mean to you?



ACTION

Google the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Pick one from each to work on this week. For example, one spiritual work of mercy is forgiving injuries. This doesn't mean forgiving someone for a bruised knee but rather letting go of grudges or apologizing for hurting someone. Where in your life are you in need of offering mercy to another? Act on it and make it happen.





October 21, 2018

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #146B

Isaiah 53:10-11

Psalms 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

Hebrews 4:14-16

Mark 10:35-45 or Mark 10:42-45

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 is about who is favored among the Apostles. Jesus reminds them that they need to get along and not be like the Gentiles who seem to exercise authority just to lord it over others. Competition can be healthy if done properly.

Q FOCUS: *To imitate God's love.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

On October 22, an optional memorial is celebrated for one of our recent popes, St. John Paul II. The first pope from Poland, John Paul II was formed by early losses of his family, World War II, and the Communist rule of his homeland. As pope, John Paul II travelled extensively and reached out to young people, families, and the sick. He also greatly improved relations between Catholics and Jews, becoming the first pope to enter a synagogue among other acts. In his 1993 speech on the Warsaw Ghetto anniversary, Pope John Paul II exhorted Christians and Jews to "be a blessing to one another."

Church Teaching Connection

"By the Sacrament of Matrimony Christian spouses signify and participate in the mystery of unity and fruitful love between Christ and the Church; therefore, both in embracing conjugal life and in accepting and educating their children, they help one another to become holy and have their own place and particular gift among the People of God" (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 8).

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

Mark 10:42-45

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

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

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

Jesus summoned the Twelve and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

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:

In today's Gospel, Jesus presents a pretty radical view of leadership. He compares his own style of leadership to that of the rulers over the Gentiles.

► **What does Jesus say about the Gentiles' rulers?**

Jesus says that these rulers lord over everyone and make their authority felt.

► **What kinds of things do you think someone might do to make their authority felt?**

► **Have you ever been led by someone who exhibited this leadership style?**

► **Do you think this person was a good leader? Why or why not?**

Jesus tells the disciples that he has come to lead people in a different way. Instead of lording over people and making his authority felt, he is going to lead by being the servant of everyone.

► **If you were one of the disciples, how do you think you'd respond to this?**

► **Would you rather be the close supporter of a leader who will be served by others, or of a leader who will be serving others?**

► **Have you ever had a leader who served others as Jesus did?**

► **Do you think that this person was a good leader? Why or why not?**

In the longer form of this Sunday's Gospel, we hear that Jesus' words come in response to James and John requesting that they get to sit by Jesus in his Kingdom. Jesus tells them that they don't know what they are asking for. Sharing in his glory means sharing in his suffering. This is not the only time

when the Apostles don't seem to get what Jesus is saying. Even Jesus' own Apostles still sometimes failed to really get his message. Jesus tells us that whoever wishes to be first must be the slave of everyone. He reminds us that, in the Kingdom of God, things don't work like they do here on earth.

► **What kinds of behaviors or qualities make a person first here on earth?**

► **What does Jesus tell us about the behaviors that will make us first in heaven?**

► **Is Jesus' teaching challenging to you? How so?**

As Catholic Christians, we are called to love others as God loves us. In the Sacrament of Marriage, men and women embody God's love for us in their love for one another, as they love each other as God has loved them. They agree to serve one another throughout their lives. The Sacrament of Holy Orders is another sacrament of vocation. Through this sacrament, the mission that Christ entrusted to his Apostles is carried on. Bishops, priests, and deacons, when they are ordained, agree to lead Christ's Church by serving all of the members of the Church.

► **How do you think the Sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders call those who receive them to serve others as Christ has served us?**

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 50.

How do you share in Jesus' sufferings?

How do you embody God's love for one another?

How do you feel called to serve God? What is your vocation?

Act on the Word

Where Do You Lead?

You will need paper or journals and writing materials to lead this activity.

Distribute paper and writing materials, and invite the teens to make lists of all of the leadership roles that they have. Encourage them to think beyond “official” roles like club presidents so that they consider other roles such as older sibling, member of a group of friends, top student, and so on. Then, invite the teens to consider the ways in which they are servants to others. Have them make lists of the different ways in which they serve, both in big ways, such as participating in organized volunteer work, and in smaller ways, such as by being a good listener or by always offering people rides home. Once they are finished, have them look at their two lists. In what ways are their acts of service related to their leadership roles? Do they ever expect others to serve them as a result of their leadership roles?

Today's Servant Leaders

You will need internet access or informational materials about the Catholic Franciscan Volunteer Corps, Jesuit Volunteer Corps, or other Catholic volunteer groups that attract young adults. You may want to have a member of one of these groups come to speak to the teens, arrange to have a member of one of these groups available to Skype with your teens, or arrange for each of your teens to have a volunteer as a pen pal.

Together with the teens, do some research about groups with which young adults volunteer today, such as the Catholic Franciscan Volunteer Corps and the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Read profiles of the young adult volunteers on their websites, and learn more about some of the problems that these groups

are working to combat. If possible, arrange to have a volunteer visit your group, either in person or via Skype. Skype can be especially fun if you contact a volunteer in another country. Engage in informal conversation with the volunteer, allowing the teens to ask questions about his or her experience. Be sure to talk about the ways in which the volunteer is a leader in the community as a result of his or her service. If possible, it might be fun to get addresses or email addresses of volunteers so that each teen can have a pen pal. Encourage the teens to write letters or emails to these people, telling them something about themselves, asking any questions they have, and asking how this Sunday's Gospel speaks to them, in light of their role.

Closing Prayer

*Lord God,
your Son Jesus Christ
teaches us that to serve and not to be served
is the way to live in your Kingdom.
Help us to be selfless
and to freely give up our place of honor
and prestige
for the benefit of others.
Make our world a place of genuine equality
in which there are no rich and no poor.
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.