

Read

Wisdom 7:7-11

Psalm 90:12-13, 14-15,
16-17

Hebrews 4:12-13

Mark 10:17-30 or 10:17-27

LIVING THE WORD

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 10, 2021



REFLECTION

Who doesn't enjoy receiving a compliment? We tend to throw around the word *love* a lot when it comes to possessions: I love your new boots! Don't you just love this jacket?! Admittedly, I've publicly professed my love for my trusty pair of Chaco sandals any number of times. It's okay—even good—to appreciate quality and beauty in our world. However, Jesus reminds us that stuff cannot be the object of our love. Clothes, video games, cell phones—none of these things will punch our ticket to heaven. Only God can do that.

Jesus wants to be sure the man in today's Gospel has his priorities in order. But the man walks away feeling sad. He thought he was doing so well living a faithful life and observing the commandments. The man is off to a good start, but he has too much stuff. He values possessions over people. Jesus demands that it be the other way around. To be truly free to love and care for another, we cannot be bogged down by material things. People matter infinitely more than anything we could ever purchase.



ACTION

Talk to your student government at school about hosting a fundraiser for a local shelter. Invite your classmates to go through their stuff and donate what they no longer need. Do the same for your own possessions, but take it a little bit farther to be even more in line with today's Gospel—try giving away a possession that means a lot to you. Keep the family heirloom, but give away your favorite book or game. Experience the freedom that comes through selfless giving.



"Seek Ye First"

—Karen Lafferty

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ss21IHl81_E



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What is your most prized possession?
- ❖ What would it be like to live without this possession?



October 10, 2021

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #143B

Wisdom 7:7-11

Psalm 90:12-13, 14-15, 16-17

Hebrews 4:12-13

Mark 10:17-30 or 10:17-27

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 we reflect on discipleship and how we don't get to pick and choose when and how we act as disciples. In this Sunday's Gospel reading, Jesus is presented with an ideal disciple, a person who has kept all of God's commandments throughout his entire life! But Jesus recognizes that this young man has an attachment to his wealth that will get in the way of true discipleship. The young man was not willing to give up his possessions. This passage highlights the importance of being aware of Jesus' teachings and our efforts to follow them, even if they are challenging.

Q FOCUS: *True discipleship is not something we can do halfway.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

On October 15, the Church remembers St. Teresa of Jesus, who is more commonly referred to as St. Teresa of Avila. She was a Carmelite nun who worked to reform the order so that it was more in line with Jesus' focus on possessing the kingdom of God, rather than on possessing earthly treasures. She was a mystic, who wrote about our interior spiritual life and the way prayer leads us to closer union with God. She is considered a doctor of the Church. (Doctor of the Church is a title given to some saints who, through their writings and actions, greatly contributed to the Church's understanding of God and humanity's relationship with him.)

Church Teaching Connection

An important part of Christian discipleship is "the option or love of preference for the poor. This is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness. It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods" (*Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 42).

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 10:17-27

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.

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: *You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.*" He replied and said to him, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth." Jesus, looking at him, loved him and

said to him, “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were amazed at his words. So Jesus again said to them in reply, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said, “For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for 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:

In today's Gospel, we learn that discipleship isn't something that we “sort of” do—it is something that takes great commitment. We see a young man approach Jesus. He seems to be a good model of discipleship since he has kept all of God's commandments from a young age. What a saint this guy must have been! And here he is, willing to follow Jesus, but Jesus tells him that there's something still missing. This young man, along with being a good follower of the law, seems to be quite wealthy. When Jesus tells the man that he must sell his possessions and then give the money to the poor, the man has a hard time accepting this aspect of discipleship.

There are two important things we can take away from this exchange. First, we learn that Jesus

does not compromise when it comes to discipleship. We cannot pick and choose which parts of his teaching that we want to follow. Second, and most importantly, we see that even when he is challenging us, Jesus still loves each of us. Before he responds to the young man, we hear that Jesus loves him because he is seeking God and trying to follow Jesus' teaching

► **What are some of Jesus' teachings that young people might have difficulty following?**

► **What are some possessions that young people value?**

► **How might these teachings or possessions make it harder for someone to follow Jesus?**

The second part of the reading involves an interesting metaphor. Jesus talks about a camel passing through the eye of a needle. He's not referring to a needle used for sewing—the needle's eye was a nickname for a very small passageway into the city. It would be narrow enough for a person to squeeze through on their own, but still impossible for a camel to pass through. With this background, we can understand Jesus' point better. A person can pass through the needle's eye as long as they are not carrying anything with them. Walking through it with a bag of possessions would be as impossible as trying to fit a camel through there! Jesus is not necessarily saying that we should not own anything. Rather, he is saying that if we are unwilling to part with our earthly possessions, if we are too closely attached to them, then we cannot enter into the heavenly kingdom.

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 42.

Discipleship is a challenging path to following.

Attachment to material possessions can make it difficult for us to enter into the kingdom of God.

Despite our failures, God is always reaching out to us and inviting us to a deeper relationship.

Act on the Word

Un-Packing List for Heaven

For this activity, you will need pens and either journals or paper.

This activity will help the young people see how much they might have in common with the rich young man from today's Gospel. Begin by having the teens write down the material items they own which they think they could not give up. This list will be different for every person. Maybe someone would choose her phone or computer, while another person might include his favorite piece of clothing. Encourage the teens to list between five and ten items. Next to each item, have the young people write down why they would be unwilling to part with it. Also, for each item, write down how long they think they could bear being without it.

Next, have the teens choose one item on their list and consider the last point they wrote down—how long they could imagine being without an item. Have each person make a plan to be without that item for just a little longer than they predicted. Encourage them to make an exercise of it this week. We do not want to be like the rich young man who walked away from Jesus. By lessening our attachment to a certain item, we are creating more space for Jesus to work in our lives. Have the teens formulate a plan for leaving behind each item for part of

this week and what they will do to avoid the instinct to use the item. For example, if you spend too much time on your phone, when you take a break from it each day use that time to pray.

Once they have finished writing, ask for a few volunteers to share some of their responses with the whole group. If you have time, ask them to share which items are more important to them and which are easier to let go of.

Closing Prayer

*Loving Father,
your kingdom of mercy and redemption
is the greatest gift we can hope to receive.
Your Son promise that it belongs
to those who have renounced the allure of wealth
and see you as the source of their salvation.
With you all things are possible.
Open our eyes to this truth apparent in our world.
We ask this 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.