

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



Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 20, 2024



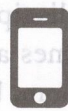
REFLECTION

To say someone is ambitious recognizes they have a strong desire to achieve success, accompanied by hard work and determination. Ambitious people don't assume; they ask, they try, and they actively work to make things happen. Our culture recognizes this as an asset in practically every area of life.

Today's Gospel focuses on the ambition of the apostles James and John, brothers who were among the first called to follow Jesus. They are mentioned several times in the Gospels, and we can infer that they were close to Jesus and were hard working and dedicated. The problem isn't their ambition; it's their goal: they ask to share in Christ's glory. To be seated to his left and right means they would enjoy the perks of a privileged position. It's this focus on power and prestige that Jesus corrects, not their ambitious boldness. We should aspire to greatness, but the only path to greatness is through loving service. In God's kingdom, power is used to care for others, which is why Jesus came to serve, not to be served.

ACTION

Spend time journaling about your own ambitions. Consider your gifts, talents, and goals as you discern who God is calling you to be and what God is calling you to do. In prayer, ask God to shed light on how you are being called to care for and serve others though your interests, gifts, and talents. Reflect on how you understand greatness and whether it aligns with the teaching of Christ in today's Gospel.



Add "A Leader's Prayer"
to your daily prayer this week.
<https://ltp.org/s/leadership-prayer>

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Are you ambitious? How do you aspire to greatness in your own life?
- ❖ How does your faith in Jesus Christ impact your own approach to and use of power?



October 20, 2024

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 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

In today's Gospel, Jesus helps his own disciples understand his mission and ministry. James and John ask for seats of honor in Jesus' kingdom, but they don't understand what they are asking. Jesus tells them again of his suffering and what it will be like when he comes in glory. He also reiterates the theme of servant leadership. The young people are invited to consider how the world views power and glory and how Jesus views those things. When we become close in our relationship with him, Jesus will lead us to the fullness of glory in his kingdom at the end of time. We might face sufferings in this life, but by remaining close to Christ, we experience his joy and love and share it with others.

Q FOCUS: *Pray with boldness. Follow Christ's example of humble service.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

On October 22, the Church honors St. John Paul II, who was pope from 1978 to 2005. This globe-trotting pope visited many countries, wrote fourteen encyclicals and several books, and canonized hundreds of holy men and women and beatified thousands more. He shared the hope of our faith with the world and inspired millions. World Youth Day began under his watch as he inspired the young people of the world to be witnesses of their faith. John Paul II

left a legacy of prayer and teaching that continues to move the world.

Church Teaching Connection

"The one who serves does not consider himself superior to the one served, however miserable his situation at the moment may be. Christ took the lowest place in the world—the Cross—and by this radical humility he redeemed us and constantly comes to our aid. Those who are in a position to help others will realize that in doing so they themselves receive help; being able to help others is no merit or achievement of their own. This duty is a grace" (Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*, 35).

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 10:35-45

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.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." He replied, "What do you wish me to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with

which I am baptized?" They said to him, "We can." Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them 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:

► **What is the boldest prayer you ever brought before God? It might be too personal to share your specific prayer intention, but can you share your experience of what it was like approaching God with that prayer? How did you feel before? How did you feel afterwards?**

Today, we encounter two of Jesus' disciples who are coming to him with a bold request. James and John were among the first disciples called by Jesus. They were working on their fishing boat with their father when Jesus walked by (Matthew 4:21–22). James and his brother John left everything to follow the Messiah. They spent a lot of time with Jesus and knew him well. Not only did they become part of the twelve apostles, but they were also part of Jesus' inner circle. They went with him to the mountaintop where he was transfigured (Matthew 17:1–2) and

then they were also invited to accompany him as he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36–37).

► **Close friends have a different relationship than mere acquaintances. What are some of the differences between acquaintances and close friends?**

These brothers knew Jesus; they trusted him, and they loved him. And because of this, they were able to ask big things of him. Among the boldest of requests, they asked to sit at the right and left hand of Jesus. Essentially, they were asking Jesus to put them in the most powerful and honor filled positions. They believed that Jesus would come into worldly power, like a political king, and they would be his right- and left-hand men. Even if that were to be the case, that Jesus would wield earthly, political power, their request is presumptuous.

As Jesus points out, they didn't truly know what they were asking. Even though they, and all of the twelve disciples, had seen Jesus do wonders and had even accomplished some on their own in Jesus' name, they kept missing the fact that Jesus would suffer and die before coming into his power. They failed to realize that if they were to follow him, they too would have the same fate. Jesus tells them yet again about his suffering that is to come and theirs as well. Jesus also tries to help the disciples reframe their understanding of what it means to be great.

► **What are some ways that the world views power and status today?**

The disciples' understanding of power and glory does not match up with what Jesus tells them. Today's view of power and glory might not either. Jesus proposes a radically different view: to be great, we must become the least. We must serve others. In doing so, we are imitating Christ's life. We are walking with him and becoming part of his inner circle as we pour out ourselves for others. He showed us what a life without fear looks like. It is a life overflowing with love. It is an abundant life that is filled with joy. It is a truly great life.

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.

James and John make a request with boldness because they know and trust Jesus.

As our life of discipleship continues, we get to know Jesus at a deeper level.

True greatness is found in serving others.

Act on the Word

Who's the Greatest Skits

For this activity, you will need notecards, random props for skits, various sized containers, copies of the Gospel reading from today (enough so that each young person can have one), and pens.

This fun activity will bring the events of today's Gospel reading into a contemporary setting by having the teens act out the story. Each skit group will be challenged to incorporate a certain genre, prop, and random word into their skit.

Before the activity begins, prepare three containers with the things the teens must incorporate. The first container will hold genre notecards. On each notecard, you should write one genre on it. Examples of genres include action, fantasy, mystery, comedy, children's/animated, and British period drama. Fill the second container with props that you find around your ministry space, such as office supplies, sports equipment, books, and so on. You should have enough props that each small group will be able to use one. In the third bucket, place notecards that have a random word on them. Random words could include things like the name of your church, animal species, types of sports, and so on.

When you are ready to begin the activity, divide the young people into small skit groups. Give each person a pen and a copy of the Gospel reading from today. Have the groups reread the Gospel and then select one item from each container. All groups should now have a genre, at least one prop, and one random word. Their challenge is to create a modern day version of the Gospel story, where all the characters are more or less contemporary. This skit must be in the genre they selected, use the prop, and include the random word. They can use their copies of the Gospel to create their skit and write out dialogue.

Give the groups at least five minutes for skit preparation, though more time can be given if your schedule allows. Then, when the time is up, have each group perform their skit. After the performances, take some time to talk with the teens about how Jesus' message to his disciples in this Gospel reading is still relevant to their lives today.

Closing Prayer

*O God,
source of all goodness,
you call us to humble ourselves
to be servants as we build up the Kingdom.
Send your Holy Spirit
to transform our hearts
and strengthen us in our mission
of sharing the Good News.
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.