



July 4, 2021

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #101B

Ezekiel 2:2-5

Psalm 123:1-2, 2, 3-4

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Mark 6:1-6

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 his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus is rejected. People don't want to hear his message, and they think that perhaps Jesus is a fraud—how could he be a great teacher if he's just a boy from the village? We also choose whether we will accept Jesus or not. We make this choice many times each day, and we are called to consciously engage in Christ's teaching and participate in the Kingdom of God. How do we make a home for Jesus in our hearts? How do we welcome him into our hearts every single day of our lives? Being open to and accepting of Jesus changes us; Christ transforms us absolutely.

Q FOCUS: *To accept Jesus and allow our lives to be transformed by him.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

On Monday, July 5, the Church remembers St. Anthony Zaccaria. He studied medicine and cared for the souls of his patients by encouraging them to seek Jesus through the sacraments. He was committed to living a life committed to Jesus and his teachings, and eventually became a priest. He began three religious communities, one for men, one for women, and one for laypeople. These communities worked to reform society by inspiring people to follow the Christian way of life and have a deep love of the sacraments.

Church Teaching Connection

"In faith, Christ is not simply the one in whom we believe, the supreme manifestation of God's love; he is also the one with whom we are united precisely in order to believe. Faith does not merely gaze at Jesus, but sees things as Jesus himself sees them, with his own eyes: it is a participation in his way of seeing. . . . Christian faith is faith in the incarnation of the Word and his bodily resurrection; it is faith in a God who is so close to us that he entered our human history" (*Lumen fidei*, 18).

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 6:1-6

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 departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Jesus said to

Read

Ezekiel 2:2-5

Psalm 123:1-2, 2, 3-4

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Mark 6:1-6

LIVING THE WORD

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 4, 2021



REFLECTION

The story of Jesus being rejected in his hometown of Nazareth reminds us to be wary of dismissing truth. Here, the truth that Jesus is the Messiah is dismissed with a flippant, "Isn't this Joseph and Mary's kid?" Ironically, Christians might dismiss this story by thinking, "We have accepted Jesus, this message is for those who haven't!" We have become experts at rationalizing (making excuses for behaviors and beliefs) and looking for loopholes to reject difficult truths. This dangerous skill prevents us from taking responsibility, doing what is good, and admitting when we're wrong. Scripture frequently warns us of this sin, which is a result of "hardened" or "obstinate" hearts. Whatever lures us to deceive ourselves, this obstinance prevents us from hearing the Truth of Christ. How, then, do we use our God-given ability to reason and discern truth from deception? We look to Christ's model and message of humility.



ACTION

Practice humility this week. Humility balances self-knowledge with reverence for God. With humility, we acknowledge that God is the source of our goodness, gifts, and talents. Rather than claiming success as our own, the humble person recognizes and praises God for working through them, and likewise, recognizes and praises God for working through others. This is how humility helps us to hear when a truth is spoken, regardless of the context. Sometimes it is hard to discern this in the moment. Therefore, take time each evening this week to review your day and see if your actions were done with humility and if you recognized God's presence in others.



Check out this article:

"Mother Teresa's 15 Tips to Help You Become More Humble"

<http://www.ncregister.com>

[/blog/armstrong/mother](http://www.ncregister.com/blog/armstrong/mother-teresas-15-tips-to-help-you-become-more-humble)

[-teresas-15-tips-to-help-you](http://www.ncregister.com/blog/armstrong/mother-teresas-15-tips-to-help-you-become-more-humble)

[-become-more-humble](http://www.ncregister.com/blog/armstrong/mother-teresas-15-tips-to-help-you-become-more-humble)



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ When have you dismissed a truth through rationalizing?
Did you dismiss the messenger, like Jesus was, or the message itself?
- ❖ How skilled are you at rationalizing? How skilled are you at humility?

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 222.

**The people of Nazareth rejected Jesus;
we are called to accept Jesus.**

**We are given the opportunity every day
to accept or reject Jesus.**

**By accepting Jesus, we are called to live
out his love in our lives.**

Act on the Word

Accepting the Love of God

If possible, arrange for the parish priest to be available during this activity so that the teens can participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

As a large group (or as small groups), invite the teens to discuss what it means to accept or reject Jesus in our everyday lives. Can acceptance or rejection ever be a single event that decides for life how you will always accept or reject him? What should a person do when he has rejected Jesus and is sorry for his action?

Help the young people explore this topic more by having them evaluate familiar situations in light of these questions. Some situations might include academic honesty, issues among friends or acquaintances, issues between parents and teens, bullying, treatment of the poor, treatment of the sick, public policy, social justice issues, and life-related issues. In this discussion, have the teens talk about what it would look like to accept and reject Jesus in each situation.

Emphasize to the teens that although we are called to accept Jesus, we all fall short in this endeavor. The liturgy and sacraments are intended to help us build relationship with God and help us grow in our commitment to Jesus and his teaching. They help us to build a habit of accepting Jesus, even when faced with temptations. The sacramental grace we receive helps to grow in our relationships with Jesus. Remind students that when we fall short, we confess our sins, and vow to do better the next time we are faced with a similar situation. Encourage the teens to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the coming week. If possible, you could arrange for a priest to be available for the sacrament during your meeting. Have the teens spend time in prayer before going to Reconciliation and lead them in an examination of conscience.

Closing Prayer

*God of wisdom,
you have given us the gift of faith.
May we nurture it through worship and
study of Scripture.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
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.

them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

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:

Have you ever heard someone say, “Oh, you’ve grown up so much! I can’t believe how tall you are now” or “You look so grown up, I can’t believe it!”? As kids grow up they hear about how much they’ve grown, how much they are changing, and how grown up they look. Far-flung family and friends who don’t see a small child or teen daily can hardly believe their eyes when they realize how much a loved one has changed. Sometimes it is difficult for such people to realize that major adult steps have been taken; a grandmother might fret about a driver’s license for a grandson or perhaps an uncle might be wondering how his niece will manage a flight without a parent accompanying her. When such changes happen, those familiar with you might be imagining what you were like as a toddler, or remember you causing mischief at eight years old. They are adjusting to the idea of young loved ones being closer to adulthood.

► Has someone ever expressed these ideas about you?

► Have you ever expressed these ideas about a younger cousin or sibling?

Jesus experienced a similar effect when, during his preaching, teaching and healing ministry, he returned to his hometown, Nazareth. Jesus had been a boy like the other boys—he is fully human, but he is also fully divine. His friends, family, and neighbors would have remembered Jesus being a boy just like their own sons and brothers. They would have remembered Jesus learning his father’s trade or drawing water from the well. They would recall the youthful child Jesus once was, and have trouble realizing that the boy had grown into a great man. This disconnect was evident when Jesus started preaching and teaching in Nazareth, and the people did not respond to his words. Instead of hearing his message, they grumbled wondering why Joseph and Mary’s son would be preaching like this. They rejected Jesus and his message.

► Have you ever experienced rejection by someone? How did it make you feel and what did you do about it?

It is a painful experience; a person’s mind may fill with worry, and a person’s confidence may take a dive. Rejection can emotionally hurt a person. Jesus experienced this rejection in his hometown, and today’s Gospel reminds us of the rejection he will eventually experience in Jerusalem, when he is convicted and put to death. In spite of their rejection, Jesus still showed mercy to those who were sick and healed them. He did what he could, but he was not able to work as many miracles and proclaim the Kingdom of God as he did in other places because of the people’s lack of faith. They just wouldn’t listen or let themselves see who Jesus truly was.

In our own lives, we decide whether we accept or reject Jesus’ message. We are given this choice every day, and in every moment of the day. We can choose to accept Jesus, or we can choose to reject him for sinful behavior. We accept Jesus when we pray, receive sacraments, and when we do for others what Jesus has taught us to do. Accepting Jesus is a lifelong exercise in being loved by Jesus and responding to his love.

► In what areas of your life do you accept Jesus? Do you reject him in any areas of your life?