

Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Junior High

Submitted by jspurgin on Fri, 09/15/2017 - 11:49

Junior High Session

Deuteronomy 5:12—15

Mark 2:23—3:6

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Good and gracious God,

you have created everything for our good.

Help us to keep Sunday, the first day of the week,

as our special day to rest and recreate ourselves in your image.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Reflection

The theme for today is to keep holy the Lord's Day. On a sheet of paper designed like the page in a day planner calendar, print "Sunday" at the top of the page, and in a column on the left side, list in order the hours of the day. Fill in the calendar with the various activities that you do (or wish you could do) on a typical Sunday with your family.

Discuss:

- What are some activities that you do on Sunday that are different from the activities on the other days of the week?
- What activities do you do on Sunday that show ways to keep the Lord's Day a holy day?
- Why do you think it is important to keep Sunday as a holy day?

Allow time for discussion. The Third Commandment is to keep holy the Lord's Day. This commandment reminds us to keep God as the center of our lives. It is also an expression of God's great love and goodness to us.

Listening to the Word of God

In today's gospel, listen to the question that the Pharisees pose to Jesus about keeping laws, and Jesus' response about the sabbath day.

Read Mark 2:23—3:6

Allow for silence

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why are the Pharisees questioning Jesus and his disciples?
- What was Jesus' response about keeping the law?
- Why do you think the Pharisees remained silent when they heard Jesus' response to their question?

Scripture Background

Provide 2–3 minutes of background information on the gospel using the Catechist Background section.

In the first reading from Deuteronomy, the sabbath, the day of rest, is described as a remembrance of the people's deliverance through the Exodus. God's action of bringing them into a "place of rest" — the Promised Land— is recalled and celebrated by the Sabbath observance. The reading mentions that the people benefit from a pause in strenuous labor.

The Lord's Day is a time to worship God the Creator. It is a time to rest from our work and to make sure all the work we do is God's work. It is a time to nourish our faith and our lives.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What do think Jesus meant when he said "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath"?
- What are some ways that you can keep the Lord's Day holy?
- What are some things that you can do to participate more fully in the Eucharist?

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

The gospel reading identifies Jesus with King David. The bread eaten by David's soldiers was sacred and to be eaten by only the priests. But just as David had the authority to take and eat this bread, so Jesus and his disciples may strip grain from the wheat fields, even though this was considered work, and a violation of the Sabbath rest.

The Pharisees were not the religious authorities of Jesus' day, but rather a pious Jewish sect. They were zealous in their religious observance of the Jewish Law. In his clash with the Pharisees over whether it is permissible to heal on the Sabbath, Jesus presents a challenge that reaches far beyond this historical moment. He announced, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." In other words, the law of God is for human good, and anything that subverts this good in the name of religion is to be firmly resisted. This point is made even more strongly by the inclusion of the story of Jesus healing the man with the withered hand.

The purpose of law is to promote and enhance life. Only when laws defeat their purpose may or should they be defied. This is what Jesus was telling the Pharisees in today's gospel.

- Think of some of your activities on Sunday. Can any of these activities be considered "labor"?
- How do I decide when a law defeats its purpose — and may or should be defied?
- What are some ways that you can help others to take a break from their strenuous work?

Sacrament Connection

As Catholics, we have the obligation to take part in Mass on Sunday. We rest from all work that is not necessary. We are to use Sunday as the day to help us keep our hearts and minds focused on God.

The Gospel in Life

Start your week this Sunday with God first in your heart and minds. Then the work you do for the



rest of the week can be out of love for him and in his honor.

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