

## Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session, read all the readings.

Genesis 3:9—15

Psalms 130:1—2, 3—4, 5—6, 7—8

2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1

Mark 3:20—35

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Is there a particular reading that appeals to you? Is there a word or image that engages you?

Read the following **The Word in Liturgy** and **Catholic Doctrine** sections. These give you background on what you will be doing during this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need.

### The Word In Liturgy

One of the primary themes of catechesis is creation, presented in light of our redemption in Christ. Our redemption in Christ in turn illuminates the meaning of the Fall. The first reading from Genesis elicits both themes: creation and the Fall. The gospel, by portraying Jesus as the one who “binds the strong man” (Satan) in his own house, points straight at the heart of the mystery of redemption.

The Genesis passage arose as the people of ancient Israel grappled with the reality of evil in a world which owed its existence to a Creator whom they knew to be utterly good. Taken from a section known as the prehistory (Genesis 1—11), this short narrative shows how Adam and Eve’s sin of disobedience immediately results in shame, mistrust, and blaming. God’s cursing the snake ends, nevertheless, with a suggestion that the woman still has power over it. Although Adam and Eve were tempted by the snake, they were not merely victims, but acted in freedom. They are visited by the disastrous consequences of their disobedience to God, yet Adam and Eve never lose their inherent dignity of being created in the image and likeness of God.

In today’s gospel reading, there is the theme of relationships. In particular, the gospel account includes a dispute about the relationship of Jesus to the world of demonic power is settled. Jesus’ preaching and healing often astonished people. Some even questioned his sanity and the origin of his authority. He brilliantly confounds those who suspect him of demonic power, and turns the tables on his opponents. It is not Jesus but those whose hearts are hardened who are in danger of separating themselves from God’s friendship



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("Beelzebub" is the name of an unclean spirit, otherwise unknown in Jewish literature, who is perhaps a demonic prince.). Returning to the theme of relationship, the passage concludes by asserting that bonds of relationship with Jesus result, first and foremost, from doing the will of God. Thus, the entire passage has the unexpected outcome, challenging the hearer to conversion.

### **Catholic Doctrine** ***Creation and the Fall***

God is eternal and uncreated. All things in the universe owe their continued existence to God. God is present in the inmost being of humanity, because we occupy a unique place in the hierarchy of created things (CCC 355). Humans are made in the divine image and are very good (see Genesis 1:27, 31), and therefore are set over the remainder of creation as stewards to care for it on God's behalf. We are created to praise, thank, and love God our creator.

The Fall is the act of primordial disobedience that brought sin into the world. The figurative language of Genesis imparts the truth that the sinful deed freely committed by our first parents taints the whole of human history. Their personal sin affected human nature (CCC 404). Transmitted in a fallen state to all humanity, this tragedy described as "original sin" is not something committed by those who follow, but rather it is contracted. After the Fall, humanity was not abandoned by God but called by the Lord who mysteriously announces both struggle and victory over sin (CCC 410).

Our Catholic tradition sees in this passage from Genesis the "first gospel" (CCC 411); it includes the announcement of the New Adam that we have in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:21—21, 45). Thus, while our first parents sinned and that fallen state is transmitted to all humanity, God continues to reach out to us graciously, reestablishing that intimacy and communion that was broken, in his Son Jesus Christ. All of salvation history leads to Christ, the New Adam, in whom we are restored and healed.

The very heart of everything we teach and believe is centered in the person of Christ and the restoration we have by his suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension (CCC 426). While we live with the evil residue of a fallen nature and a fallen world, we believe that where sin abounds, grace abounds even more. Evil and sin will not have the final word because of the Paschal Mystery. The final word is "spoken" by God in Jesus Christ who is the light of the world, a light no darkness can extinguish. In Christ, we are made a new creation, and in Christ we are raised up in love into that intimate communion with God from which we fell.