



a Kendall Hunt Company

Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year B, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26

John 17:11b-19

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Dear Jesus, we know we are among those you sent into the world to continue your mission. Help us act and speak in a way worthy of your confidence. As you prayed so many years ago, we continue to ask for God's help to give us strength, courage and wisdom, to begin God's Kingdom on earth.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Invite participants to imagine that they are Jesus' chosen Apostles, but that they need one more. Accept nominations for candidates in today's world who might be able to replace Judas as a disciple. To accept nominations ask:

- What is it about this person that you believe will make him/her a worthy disciple?
- How are the qualities of this person similar to Jesus?
- What changes would you like to make in your own life so that you might be nominated as the twelfth disciple?

RCL Benziger
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Listening to the Word of God

Early in the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostles replace Judas.

Read Acts 1:15-17, 20a, 20c-26

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why did the remaining eleven Apostles feel the need to choose one more?
- What means did the Apostles use to make their choice?
- What can we learn from the Apostles about making our own decisions?

We hear in today's Gospel Jesus praying for God to direct the Apostles.

Read John 17:11b-19

Allow for silence.

- What does Jesus ask of God for the disciples?
- What must the disciples do next?

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- Why is unity so important for the disciples?
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Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

We learn from the Book of Acts that the Apostles have gathered to make a decision. Judas, of course, is no longer with them and he needs to be replaced. Working together, the disciples make two choices and pray over them asking for God's help to decide on one.

Jesus realizes his time on earth is coming to an end, and he is about to return to God. Jesus wants to be sure that the disciples will continue the work he began so he prays asking God to seal and strengthen the disciples for this job.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How would you have responded to Jesus' prayer request if you were one of the eleven Apostles?
- How would you, yourself, respond today?
- Why do you think it is necessary for all Christians to be unified?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life.**]

Doctrinal Discussion Starter

The Church has a particular mission and order of leadership.

Wanting to be sure that the mission of the Church continues with the Apostles, Jesus prays to God asking that God help them in their work. He asks God to protect them in a specific way so that they might know the truth and be guarded from anyone or anything that would prevent them from doing this work. These Apostles, then, were the first leaders of the Church. These leaders, and those who follow them to this very day, are included in Jesus' prayer that they might proclaim the faith and work toward bringing about the Kingdom of God. All those who come after Jesus, the Apostles and leaders through the ages down to our own time, hand on the words, beliefs, and faith initiated by Christ. All leaders of the Church are called to lead as servants of others, just as Jesus was a servant to all. Every one of us who believes in Jesus, shares in the mission of the Church and has a responsibility to pass on that faith.

- How can you help show God's love to others?
- What do you have in common with the Apostles?
- How do you see leaders of the Church serving others?

Sacrament Connection

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One of the Church's seven sacraments is "Holy Orders." In this sacrament, priests are ordained to carry out the mission of the Church begun by Jesus. These priests are called to serve others, to pass on the faith and teachings of Jesus, to guide and lead the faithful followers of Jesus, and to show them God's love. In this way, priests help bring about the Kingdom of God on earth.

The Gospel in Life

Is there a worry or challenge you have that you can take to God in prayer this week?

