



a Kendall Hunt Company

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session, read all the readings.

Ezekiel 2:2-5

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

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Mark 6:1-6

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

The Word In Liturgy

The first reading contains a portion of the narrative of Ezekiel's call (1:1-3:15), a description that follows the classic lines of such passages found at numerous places in the Jewish scriptures (see Isaiah 6, 1; Kings 22; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Exodus 3:1-4:17; Judges 6:11-40). After describing the vision he has seen, the prophet reports on what he has heard: a clear commission to bring God's Word to his fellow citizens, a word that will pronounce a strong indictment of their faithless ways. The prophet's message will not be a popular one, so the Lord intimates the resistance that Ezekiel can anticipate ("hard of face and obstinate of heart are they"), even as God reassures the prophet that the message he delivers will have its impact ("whether they heed or resist...they shall know..."). It is because the prophet pronounces not his own but God's words ("You shall say to them: Thus, says the Lord GOD!") that he can be certain of its power.

Mark's story of the rejection of Jesus in his hometown highlights several themes consistent with today's focus on prophecy. Like so many of the prophets of old, Jesus' person and message are rejected by those closest to him. The reaction of his townsfolk is described variously in these words: "[Many] were astonished...they took offense...and their lack of faith." It is not Jesus' working or failing to work miracles that provokes such reactions. Rather, Mark deliberately indicates that it is Jesus' teaching, the words he utters, that arouses such resistance: "They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him?' " As he does throughout this section of his gospel, Mark drives home the point that the power of God is at work in the words of Jesus. Like the prophets who came before him, Jesus faithfully delivers God's word of power, regardless of the people's acceptance or rejection of that word.



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Catholic Doctrine

Prophecy

Prophecy is significant in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The prophet is one who is called by God to convey a message to God's people. Taken together, in conveying God's message, the Old Testament prophets accomplished three things. First, they formed a people in the hope of salvation and in the expectation of a new covenant written on their hearts. Second, they proclaimed a radical redemption of God's people from their unfaithfulness, a redemption that ultimately would include all peoples. Third, they helped reveal by the conduct of their own lives the undying love of God for God's people. In other words, prophets function as messengers for the Most High. God's message, conveyed by words or deeds, is delivered by Old Testament prophets under the guise of either criticizing or energizing the people.

In examining the notion of prophecy, it is important to note that we believe God's promise is hidden and is made clear only in the full revelation in Jesus Christ. The long line of Old Testament prophets leading up to this revelation in Christ concludes with John the Baptist, who while declining the title "prophet" (John 1:9-23), nevertheless functioned as one.

We also believe that prophecy continued in the early Church, but that its reference was to Christ (such as in Peter's preaching found in Acts 2:14-21) or to the building up of the Church, Christ's body, in an organized manner (such as regulated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:29-33).

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