

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for the session, read all the readings:

Wisdom 7:7-11

Psalm 90:12-13, 14-15, 16-17

Hebrews 4:12-13

Mark 10:17-30

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading which appealed to you? Was there a word or image that engaged you?

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 for the session.

The Word in Liturgy

Authorship of the Book of Wisdom is ascribed to a cultured Jew living most likely in Alexandria at the end of the first century B.C., a sage who was deeply concerned about how to integrate the attractions of Hellenistic “wisdom” that were inscribed in the books of the Law and the Prophets into the traditions of the Jewish people. In this passage the author evokes the story (1 Kings 3:6-9) of how Yahweh offered to give Solomon whatever he wished for, and the king asked only for the gift of wisdom. For the pious Jew, true wisdom was a gift from God, never the sole product of human efforts to “figure out” the laws of nature.

The rich man in today’s gospel stands in stark contrast to the figure of Solomon (first reading) who knew exactly what to ask for in order to “gain everything.” This potential disciple of Jesus seeks the ultimate good (“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”), but when Jesus answers him, describing the cost of discipleship, the man “went away sad.” Mark underlines the point of the encounter by having Jesus reiterate to his disciples that salvation (for a rich man!) is a work of grace, a gift of God (“All things are possible for God”). Jesus offers saving words to those who seek eternal life, and the gospels (indeed, every part of the Scriptures) pass on that same offer, that same salvation, to all who hear the Word proclaimed in every age.

Catholic Doctrine

Word of God/Revelation

How and what God reveals forms the centerpiece of Catholic theology. Everything focuses around Jesus Christ, a person we profess as the ultimate and total revelation of God and of



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God's love for us. We believe that Jesus is the preexistent and eternal Word of God who by—his earthly life, teaching, ministry, and his paschal mystery has definitively shown us the way to God and accomplished our salvation from sin and death. Without this fundamental assertion, Jesus simply is another prophet, a holy man, a founder of a religious movement. By faith, we know and proclaim him to be much more, the eternal Word, the self-communication of God to humanity (OT20).

A major implication of this foundational principle, God's self-revelation in the person of Jesus, is that a personal response is demanded. God issues an invitation to us—but the response is given in our total and free self-sacrifice. Thus, we Catholics understand that a total and free personal response is the only adequate response we can make to this revelation. To obey the truth revealed in Jesus requires more than shaping one's intellect. It takes the faithful assent of the whole person: mind, heart, and body.

While this personal response is to be made by each individual believer, faith is not an act performed in isolation. Above all, it is the Church as a community that believes, and in this way, an individual's faith is born, nourished, and sustained.

