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> Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

Sunday Connection

Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Readings & Background [This Sunday's Readings](#)

First Reading

2 Kings 4:8-11,14-16a

Hospitality extended to Elisha will be rewarded.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 89:2-3,16-19

Sing God's praises forever.

Second Reading

Romans 6:3-4,8-11

Through Christ we are dead to sin but alive in God.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus outlines the costs and rewards of discipleship.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today's Gospel is the conclusion of the instructions and consolations that we have heard Jesus offering to his disciples during the past few weeks. In this passage, Jesus summarizes both the costs of discipleship and its rewards. Once again our understanding of the Gospel is strengthened by considering the context in which it was written and the perspective of Matthew's audience.

The conditions of discipleship outlined in Matthew's Gospel may appear harsh. Yet they underline for us a truth—choosing anything with one's whole heart has consequences. Choosing life with Christ means that every relationship we have must be understood from a new perspective. For many in Matthew's community, this choice brought division to their family.

Matthew also outlines the reward of hospitality offered to Jesus' followers. In today's Gospel, Jesus explains the difficulties of discipleship, yet reveals that those who welcome the disciples have also welcomed him.

Today's Gospel also highlights for us the importance of hospitality in the Christian life. To welcome another in Jesus' name is to extend hospitality to Jesus himself. We have many opportunities in our daily life to reach out to others, to be a welcoming presence and a sign of God's love.

Grades 1-3

Making the Connection (Grades 1, 2, and 3)

Gospel Reading

Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus outlines the costs and rewards of discipleship.

Younger children may begin hosting or attending parties or sleepovers. Invite children to think about these gatherings with friends in the spirit of Christian hospitality.

Materials Needed

- party hats, paper cups and plates, juice and a healthy snack (Check to ensure children do not have any food allergies.)

Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Put the paper plates, juice, and snacks on a table. As children arrive, say: **Welcome! Today we are having a gathering!** Ask two children to help you host. Give one child the party hats to pass out and have the other child stand at the table with snacks and invite children to get what they want.
2. Ask the other children to line up at the "door" and take turns pretending to ring the doorbell. Pretend to open the door, welcoming each guest by name as the host hands out party hats. Say: **Everyone is welcome here today. We are happy you are here!**
3. Have all the children get snacks from the table and sit and enjoy them. Discuss ways that we can make one other feel welcome when we have or attend parties, gatherings, or other events. (By being friendly, by asking what they need, by not talking about people who aren't there, by taking turns and being a good sport when playing games, etc.) When children have finished eating, invite them to help you put away the plates and cups. Thank them for their help.
4. Say: **Jesus tells us that as his disciples, we are to welcome others with the same spirit of love and friendship. Listen as I read today's Gospel.**
5. Read aloud today's Gospel, Matthew 10:37-42.
6. Say: **As disciples of Jesus, we are to love Jesus with our whole hearts and we are to welcome, or receive, others with love, friendship, and generosity. When we choose to be loving and welcoming, we are showing our love for Jesus and for all people.**
7. Play a game in which you name welcoming and unwelcoming behaviors. Have children lift up their party hat when the behavior is welcoming and keep their hat on when it is unwelcoming.
8. Close by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

Grades 4-6

Making the Connection (Grades 4, 5, and 6)

Gospel Reading

Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus outlines the costs and rewards of discipleship.

Older children are becoming more aware of the consequences of their choices and actions. Their growing awareness will help them to understand how Christian discipleship affects their decisions.

Materials Needed

- A large drawing of the traffic warning sign for a crossroad (yellow sign with a cross)

Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Ask: ***What does it mean to say that one has come to a crossroads?*** Show the example of a crossroad sign. Allow time for the group to consider the question.
2. Say: ***The expression, “we have come to a crossroad,” means that one has traveled with a person for a time, and now they each can choose to go in a different direction. Look carefully at the traffic sign for a crossroad. What does it look like?*** (a cross)
3. Say: ***Let’s listen to today’s Gospel and learn how Jesus’ words are a lot like the phrase “we have come to a crossroad.”***
4. Invite one or more volunteers to read today’s Gospel, Matthew 10:37-42.
5. Say: ***Jesus says some difficult things at the beginning of this Gospel. What does Jesus say?*** (We cannot love any person more than Jesus; to follow Jesus means we must take up our cross.)
6. Say: ***This Gospel reminds us that when we choose to follow Jesus, we might face some crossroads—times when we must part company with others, perhaps because these others are doing things that are not right. Instead we must choose to act in ways that show that we are disciples of Jesus.*** Invite the group to offer some examples of this.
7. Say: ***Jesus does not say that being his disciple will be easy. But he does promise that our life of discipleship will be rewarded.***
8. Conclude in prayer together that Jesus will help us make the choices that are right as we continue to learn to be his disciples. Pray together today’s Psalm or the [Prayer to the Holy Spirit](https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/traditional-catholic-prayers/prayers-every-catholic-should-know/prayer-to-the-holy-spirit) (<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/traditional-catholic-prayers/prayers-every-catholic-should-know/prayer-to-the-holy-spirit>).

Grades 7-8

Family

Family Connection

One can tell a lot about a family by the way they welcome others into their home. Despite parental efforts to elicit the best behavior from their children, family efforts to entertain guests are sometimes difficult. Practicing a spirit of Christian hospitality within the family can be an occasion to reflect upon the importance of this virtue. A family spirit of hospitality is a sign of faith.

When your family gathers, ask each person to consider the following questions about manners: What does it mean to be a good host? What does it mean to be a good guest? Invite each person to share their thoughts and experiences about being a guest or a host. When they have finished, read aloud today's Gospel, Matthew 10:37-42.

Ask family members to describe what Jesus says about hospitality extended to his disciples. (Those who receive Jesus' disciples also receive Jesus himself; hospitality to Jesus' disciples will be rewarded.) Then encourage family members to talk about what it means to be a good guest or a good host. You might also talk about ways in which your family's hospitality might be improved upon. Conclude in prayer together that your family grows to be one in which Christian hospitality is experienced by all. Pray together the Lord's Prayer or today's Psalm.

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