



The JOY of the GOSPEL

Five Lessons for September 2018

September 2, 2018 – Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 9, 2018 – Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 16 2018 – Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 23, 2018 – Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 30, 2018 – Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Tradition of the Elders (Lower Elementary)



September 2, 2018 – Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview

In this week's Gospel passage, Jesus teaches us that it is what is inside of us that truly leads us to sinfulness rather than what comes from outside of us. Jesus warns us that what matters most is what is in our hearts. In this lesson, students will reflect on the movement of the liturgical seasons and the Good News of the Gospel.

Directions

- A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
- B. Read aloud to your students **The Joy of the Gospel** essay as they follow along. Then, discuss the reflection questions.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. The Pharisees noticed that some disciples were eating with unwashed hands. This upset them because of the tradition of all Jews carefully washing their hands before eating. (Note: This washing was less about being clean of dirt and germs and more about a ritualistic practice.)
2. Accept reasoned answers such as praying every day, helping around the house, going to Mass every week, and so forth.
3. Accept reasoned answers such as the Ten Commandments, the Works of Mercy, the Beatitudes, the example of Jesus' life, and so forth.

Sunday Readings

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23: The Tradition of the Elders

When the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands.

—For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds. — So the

Pharisees and scribes questioned him, “Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?” He responded, “Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written:

This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts.

You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition.”

He summoned the crowd again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing

that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.

“From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts,

unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile.

Focus Questions

1. What did the Pharisees notice that some of Jesus’ disciples were doing? Why were they upset about this?
2. A hypocrite is someone who does one thing, but says or believes something else. Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites. They acted like they loved God, but in their hearts did not. What is one way that you show God that you love Him with all of your heart?
3. Jesus taught the crowd about the things that cause us to sin and do bad things. He taught that nothing can force us to do bad things. We choose to do them. What is one way that God helps us to remember to do good things?

The Joy of the Gospel

Directions: Read about the Good News below. Then, answer the reflection questions.

Welcome to a new school year! Hopefully, you had a great summer. Every year summer ends and school begins. We work hard and learn. We spend time with friends both old and new. The seasons change and then, before we know it, the school year ends and summer begins again. Each year we become more and more the person that God made us to be.

The Church marks the seasons too. Throughout the year, we learn about the life of Jesus. We worship with our family and friends. We grow in holiness. This life of the Church is called the liturgical seasons. One way of marking the movement of time in the Church is by the Sunday Gospels.

The Gospels are the four books at the beginning of the New Testament in the Bible. They tell the story of the life of Jesus. A reading from one of the Gospels is read at every Mass.

The word “gospel” means “good news.” The Good News is that God loved us so much that He sent His only Son to become man. Jesus died on the Cross to save us from sin so that we might live forever with

God in Heaven. That news is so “good” that we celebrate it every Sunday Mass.

This school year, think about the Good News of the Gospel. Share the Good New with others. Tell others about Jesus and share the Good News by the example of how you love God and how you love others.

Reflection Questions:

1. What is one thing you are most looking forward to this school year?

2. What is one thing you most want to learn about Jesus and His Church this school year?

3. What are two ways this school year that you can show and tell others about the Good News of the Gospel?

4. What is one thing that you can do this school year to follow Jesus more closely?

The Healing of a Deaf Man (Lower Elementary)



September 9, 2018 – Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview

In this week's Gospel passage Jesus heals a deaf man who also has a speech impediment. Jesus touches the man to heal him and says, "Be opened," and the man is healed. Students will contemplate how Jesus touches us and opens our ears and eyes so that we too might be healed and confident to serve the Lord.

Directions

- A. First, complete the **My Strengths** chart with your students.
- B. Then, read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
- C. Conclude by completing the **Jesus is Lord Chart** with your students.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. He was brought to Jesus by other people.
2. Jesus put His fingers into the man's ears and spit on his tongue. He said "Be opened!"
3. Jesus told the people not to say anything about what they had seen. They told everyone.

Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 7:31-37: The Healing of a Deaf Man

Again Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him,

“Ephphatha!”— that is, “Be opened!” — And immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, “He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Focus Questions

1. How did the deaf man come to meet Jesus? What was asked of Jesus?

2. What did Jesus use to heal the deaf man? What did Jesus say to heal him?
3. What did Jesus tell the people not to do? What did they actually do?

Jesus is Lord

Directions: Before reading this week's Gospel reading, complete the **My Strengths Chart**. Then, after reading the Gospel reading complete the **Jesus is Lord** chart.

My Strengths Chart

Three Things I am Good At	Three Things I Can Do Better
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Jesus is Lord Chart

Three Things I Can Do to Tell Others About Jesus
1.
2.
3.

Peter's Confession about Jesus (Lower Elementary)



September 16, 2018 – Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview

In this week's Gospel passage Jesus asks His disciples an important question about His identity, "Who do you say that I am?" The disciples' answers reveal uncertainty about who Jesus is. Jesus makes it clear, however, what we must do to be His disciples. We must take up our cross daily and follow Him. In this lesson, students will begin to answer for themselves Jesus' question.

Directions

- A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
- B. Read aloud to your students as they follow along the brief reflection on the Gospel from **"Who Do You Say That I Am."**
- C. Then, have students draw a picture of Jesus in the space provided. Encourage students to draw what they think Jesus looks like and to show Him doing something that they can follow as an example.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. "Who do the people say that I am?" John the Baptist, Elijah, one of the prophets.
2. "But who do you say that I am?" The Christ.
3. Jesus was predicting His suffering and death on the Cross and Resurrection on the Third Day.
4. A follower of Jesus must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Him.

Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 8:27-35: Peter's Confession about Jesus

Jesus and his disciples set out for the villages of Caesarea Philippi.

Along the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" They said in reply, "John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said to him in reply, "You are the Christ." Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.

He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three

days. He spoke this openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it."

Focus Questions

1. What was Jesus' first question to the disciples? How did they answer Him?
2. What was Jesus' second question to the disciples? How did Peter Answer Him?
3. After Jesus' questions to His disciples, He taught them that He must be killed and rise after three days. What was Jesus predicting?
4. What must a follower of Jesus do to "come after" Him?

“Who Do You Say that I Am?”

Directions: Read about Jesus’ question below. Then draw a picture in the space provided.

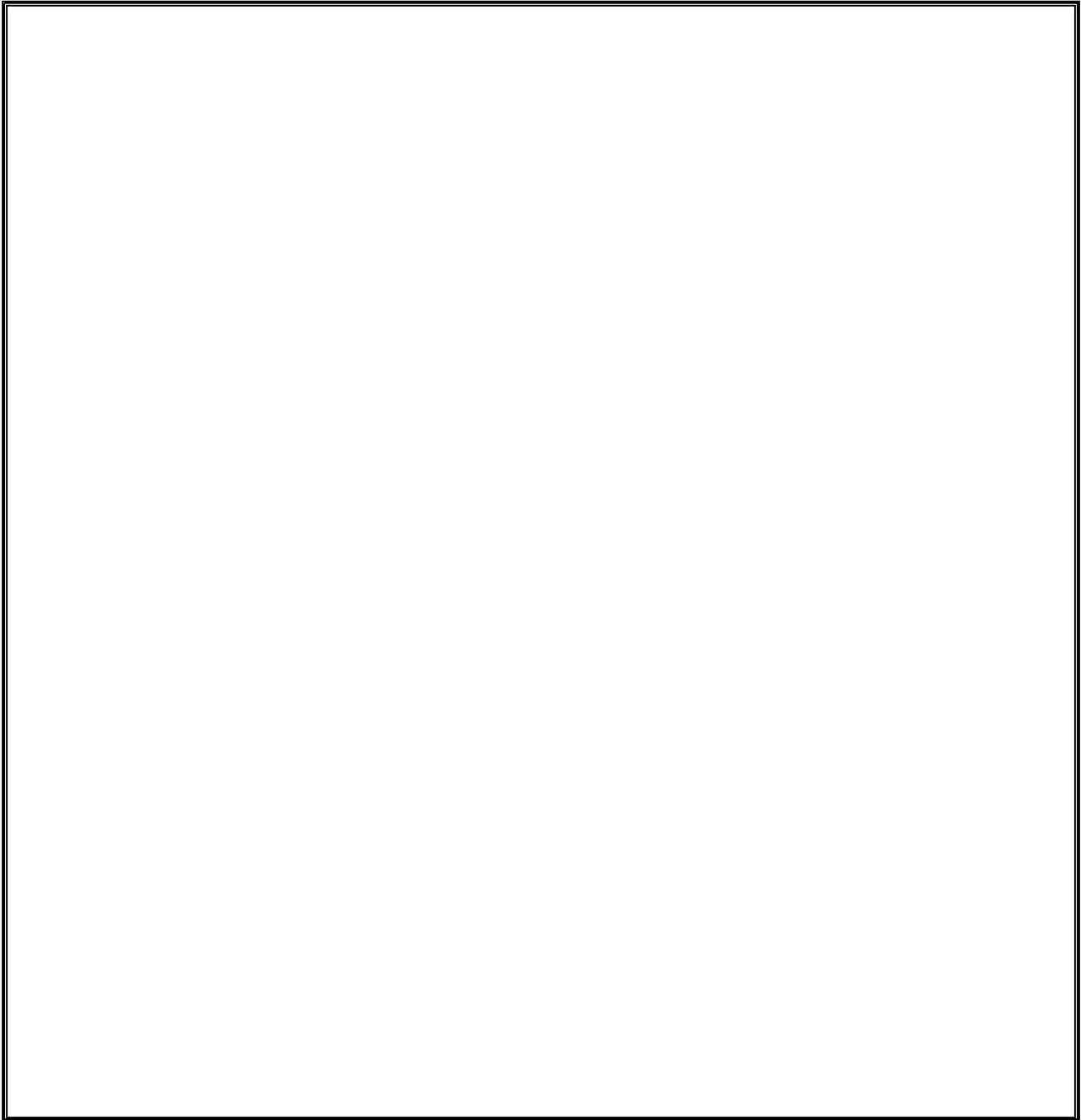
In Jesus’ time there were many ideas about who Jesus was. Some people thought He was a prophet. Others thought He was someone well-known from the Old Testament returned from the dead. Peter believed Jesus was the Christ, our Savior.

The important question for us today is the same as it was then. Who do we believe Jesus to be? Do we believe that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, the Christ?

Jesus told us what it means to follow Him. He taught us that we must be more like Him. That means carrying own cross every day. Jesus didn’t mean that we have to carry an actual cross like His. Rather, He meant that when we are sad, hurt, lonely, afraid, or tempted to sin, that we must face these things with patience and with joy and rely on His help. The things of this world will not save us. But Jesus already has saved us by His Cross and Resurrection.

Who is Jesus to you?

Draw a picture of who Jesus is to you. What does He look like? What is He doing that is an example for you to follow?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a picture of Jesus and describe what He is doing that is an example to follow.

The Greatest in the Kingdom (Lower Elementary)



September 23, 2018 – Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview

In this week's Gospel passage Jesus corrects His disciples when they argue about who among them is the greatest. Jesus points to the innocent joy of a child as the model for entry into the Kingdom of God. In this lesson, students will consider what it means to be the greatest in the Kingdom of God.

Directions

- A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
- B. Then, with a partner, in groups, or as a class, help your students create a list of five ways they can love and serve others in the Kingdom of God using the **Who Is the Greatest?** handout.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. Jesus taught about how He would have to suffer, die, and rise again on the third day. This is the second prediction of His Passion and Resurrection. He taught the same thing in last week's Gospel.
2. The disciples were arguing about which of them was the greatest.
3. Accept reasoned answers such as that the "greatest" in the Kingdom of God will be those who are humble and selflessly love and serve others rather than themselves.

Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 9:30-37: The Greatest in the Kingdom

Jesus and his disciples left from there and began a journey through Galilee, but he did not wish anyone to know about it. He was teaching his disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death the Son of Man will rise.” But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to question him. They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, he began to ask them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But

they remained silent. They had been discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.” Taking a child, he placed it in the their midst, and putting his arms around it, he said to them, “Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.”

Focus Questions

1. What did Jesus teach His disciples about as they travelled to Galilee?
2. What were the disciples arguing about?
3. What do you think Jesus meant when He told the disciples “If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all”?

Who Is the Greatest?

Directions: Answer the questions below.

In this week's Gospel, Jesus taught us that in the Kingdom of God, the last will be first. In other words, In God's Kingdom, those who love and serve others instead of themselves will be first.

What are five ways that you can love and serve others?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Temptations to Sin (Lower Elementary)



September 30, 2018 – Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Overview

In this week's Gospel passage Jesus says whoever is not against Him is for Him, while laying out a difficult teaching on the nature and consequences of sin. Jesus' teaching is simple in concept, but it is difficult to be His disciple in practice. In this lesson, students analyze scenarios of sin to apply Jesus' teaching.

Directions

- A. Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along. Then discuss the focus and reflection questions with them as a class.
- B. Read the **Sin Scenarios** aloud to your students as they follow along and discuss the questions together as a class.

Answer Key

Focus Questions

1. Jesus explains that anyone who performs a mighty deed in His name cannot at the same time be against Him.
2. It is sinful to intentionally cause someone else to sin, even if you are not sinning directly yourself. The *Catechism* explains "we have a responsibility for the sins committed by others when we cooperate in them" (CCC 1868).
3. Gehenna or Hell is the consequence for our sins.

Sin Scenarios:

- A.
 1. Dave's sin is stealing the sweater.
 2. Dave should have put the sweater back and left the store. He could save up his money to return later and buy the sweater. Or he could decide he already has enough clothes—much more than most people in the world have—and he really doesn't need another sweater.

B.

1. Elizabeth sinned by calling Jane names. Helen is sinning too, by witnessing what happened, knowing it was wrong, but not stopping Elizabeth's bullying. This is a sin of omission.
2. Helen should have stood up to Elizabeth and asked her to stop calling Jane names. She could have made an effort to be especially kind to Jane so that others could see her and know what it looks like to be a friend. Helen and Jane could have stopped playing with Elizabeth and found something else to do.

C.

1. Both Jose and Carl are sinning. Jose is stealing money from his mom, while Carl, who is not directly committing a sin, is sinning by cooperating with Jose's sin. Both are also sinning by knowingly using stolen money to buy the movie tickets.
2. Carl should have refused to help Jose steal the money. He could have also suggested they find something else to do other than see the movie.

D.

1. Both Lindsay and Brianna are sinning. Lindsay sinned knowingly not going to Mass on Sunday when she was capable of going. Lindsay also is directly causing Brianna to sin by asking her lie for her.
2. Lindsay should have gone to Mass. She could have realized what she did was wrong and found a later Mass to go to. Given that she did not go, she should have told her parents and not lied, nor pressured her younger sister to lie.

Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48: Temptations to Sin

At that time, John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us.” Jesus replied, “Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us. Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward. “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around

his neck and he were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off.

It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, where ‘their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’”

Focus Questions

- A. What do you think Jesus meant when He said, “whoever is not against us is for us”?
- B. Do you think it is a sin to cause someone else to sin? What does Jesus teach about leading someone else to sin?
- C. Gehenna is another name for Hell. What does Jesus teach about the consequences of sin?

Sin Scenarios

Directions: Answer the questions about each story.

A. Dave is shopping at a department store. He sees a sweater that he really likes. Dave cannot afford to buy the sweater. Looking around to see if there are any store employees watching, Dave puts the sweater in his shopping bag and walks out of the store without paying for the sweater.

1. How is Dave sinning in this situation?

2. What should Dave do?

B. Helen and her friends are playing on the playground. As they are playing, one of Helen's friends, Elizabeth, keeps calling another friend, Jane, a loser. It's obvious that Jane does not like being called this name. Helen knows that Jane doesn't like it, but is afraid if she says something to Elizabeth, she'll be called names too. Helen does not say anything.

1. Who is sinning in this situation? How?

2. What should Helen do?

C. Jose and Carl want to go see a movie, but don't have the money for tickets. Jose knows that his mom keeps some money in her purse. Jose asks Carl to keep watch for his mom at the doorway to her room while he takes the money from her purse. Carl agrees and stands at the doorway watching for Jose's Mom.

1. Who is sinning in this situation? How?

2. What should Carl do?

D. Lindsay is Brianna's older sister. Lindsay doesn't like going to Mass on Sunday because she says it's boring. One Sunday morning, the girls' parents had to work and told Lindsay to take Brianna with her

to Mass. Lindsay agreed, but that morning, stayed home instead. Brianna had no way of getting to Mass on her own. Lindsay told Brianna that she had to lie to their parents and tell them they went to Mass so she didn't get into trouble. Brianna reluctantly agreed not to tell.

1.) Who is sinning in this situation?

2.) What should Lindsay do?
