

Catechists and Teachers
Lectionary
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A
January 16, 2011

Intermediate Session

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

John 1:29-34

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, thank you for sending your only Son Jesus to save us.

Help us to grow closer to Jesus each day.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is the identity of Jesus. To begin, divide the children into small groups. Have the children imagine that visitors from another planet have come to earth. Give each group the task of telling the visitors about who Jesus is, using as many names or titles for Jesus that they can think of. Provide each group with a large sheet of poster paper and markers and have the children write down their titles for Jesus. Give each group the opportunity to share what they have written and introduce Jesus to the large group. Discuss:

- Who is Jesus?
- Who helps you come to know Jesus?
- What does the Church believe about Jesus?

Allow time for discussion. Our understanding of who Jesus is deepens as we grow in faith. The names of Jesus that we have come to know help us learn about Jesus' true identity.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to find out about God's servant.

Read Isaiah 49:3, 5-6.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How is God's servant described?
- Where does the unnamed servant find strength?
- What will God's servant be for the nations?

In the gospel today listen to find out what titles are given to Jesus.

Read John 1:29-34.
Allow for silence.

- What titles does John give to Jesus?
- What does John tell the others about Jesus?
- What happened at Jesus' baptism?

Scripture Background

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

Today's Old Testament reading describes the mission of God's servant. God's servant will bring deliverance to Israel. The unnamed servant in today's passage brings a promise of hope to a suffering people. God's servant will be a light to the nations and bring salvation to all the earth. This reading focuses on the identity of Jesus. During Ordinary Time, our attention is directed to Jesus Christ and the truth of his identity.

In the gospel today we find layers of clues about who Jesus is. Jesus is presented as, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." This description of Jesus' nature is symbolic of a deep truth. The symbol of the lamb brings to mind the paschal lamb whose blood saved the Israelites, as well as the lamb that bears the sins of others. This title shows that Jesus is the Savior of the world who has come to free us from sin.

The image of the spirit descending from heaven and remaining on Jesus, and the name "God's Chosen One" given to Jesus by John in today's gospel, uncover the truth of Jesus' identity as Savior.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How did God keep his promise to send a Savior?
- Why did Jesus come to live among us?
- How do the names for Jesus that are found in scripture help us understand who Jesus is?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Names of Jesus

The many names given to Jesus help us to understand the mystery of Jesus' identity. The Church uses the term Christology to describe the study of Jesus' identity. The names for Jesus found in scripture express our understanding of the nature of Jesus. The titles found in today's first reading include, "servant" and "light to the nations."

In John's gospel we find such names for Jesus as, "eternal Word," "light of the world," "the way, truth and life," "bread of life," "living water," and "good shepherd." Among all the titles given to Jesus in the New Testament, four stand out: "Lord," "Christ," "Son

of God,” and “Son of Man.” We believe that God has worked to prepare the world for the coming of a Savior. These names for Jesus found in the New Testament reveal Jesus to be the Savior of the world.

The term “Christ” or Messiah means, “anointed.” The title, as applied to Jesus, describes his status as the promised one of God, the Savior. The Catholic Church teaches that the title “Son of God,” as found in the New Testament, describes the unique relationship of Jesus who is God’s only Son and who shares in God’s divine nature.

- Why are names important?
- What do the names of Jesus teach us?
- What name for Jesus best expresses your belief?

The Gospel in Life

What can you do this week to express your belief in Jesus?

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 3

Grade 4, chapters 6, 9 and 10

Grade 5, chapters 4 and 6

Grade 6, chapter 25

Connecting to Faith First® Original Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 3

Grade 4, chapters 6 and 9

Grade 5, chapters 4 and 6

Grade 6, chapter 25