

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

Junior High Session

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

John 1:29-34

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, thank you for sending
your Son Jesus, as a sign of your love for us.

Help us grow closer to Jesus each day.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The focus for today is the identity of Jesus. To begin invite the youngsters to reflect on who Jesus is for them. Provide each person with a sheet of paper and a pencil. After a few moments of silent reflection invite them to jot down the titles for Jesus that they best relate to. Discuss:

- What are some titles for Jesus?
- Why are there many names for Jesus?
- What title for Jesus do you relate to best?

Allow time for discussion. We grow in our understanding of Jesus' identity throughout our lives. The Church uses the term Christology to describe the study of Jesus' identity.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to how God's servant is described.

Read Isaiah 49:3, 5-6.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How is God's servant described?
- What is the servant's mission?
- Where does the unnamed servant find strength?

In the gospel today listen for the names given to Jesus.

Read John 1:29-34.

Allow for silence.

- What are the names given to Jesus?

- What does John tell the others about Jesus' baptism?
- What has Jesus come to do?

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 Jesus show that he was God's Chosen One?
- What are some titles given to Jesus in scripture?
- How do the names for Jesus 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 the John's gospel we find such names for Jesus as, "eternal Word," "light of the world," "the way, truth and life," "the 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 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.

- How do the titles given to Jesus reveal the truth about his identity?
- What name for Jesus expresses our belief in Jesus as Savior?
- What title for Jesus best expresses your belief?

The Gospel in Life

How can you get to know Jesus better this week?

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 3

Junior High, Mystery of God, chapter 4

Junior High, Jesus in the New Testament, chapters 8 and 10

Connecting to Faith First® Original Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 3

Junior High, Creed and Prayer, chapter 7