

# Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

Sunday, June 28, 2020

## 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**.

## Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A Making the Connection (Grades 1, 2, and 3)

### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 10:37-42*

Jesus outlines the costs and rewards of discipleship.

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Young children are growing in their awareness of the needs of others. One way in which we can help them grow in this regard is to encourage acts of hospitality, which Jesus says will be rewarded.

#### Materials Needed

- None

#### Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. ***Let's use our imaginations today. Let's pretend we have a special visitor coming to visit with us today.***  
***What might we do to make this visitor feel welcome?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.) Choose one from the group to be the visitor and to act out some of the children's suggestions.
2. When finished, ask the group: ***How is being a guest different from being a host or hostess?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.)
3. ***Another word for the welcome we extend to a friend is called hospitality. Today's Gospel tells us something about the importance of offering hospitality. Let's listen carefully to what Jesus tells his disciples about hospitality.***

Read aloud the last part of the Gospel reading, Matthew 10:40-42.

4. ***What did Jesus say would happen to those who welcomed Jesus' disciples?*** (Anyone who welcomes a disciple of Jesus, welcomes Jesus himself.)
5. ***When we act in ways that are welcoming to our friends and our family, we are extending that welcome to Jesus himself. That makes our welcoming behaviour very important, indeed!***
6. Conclude in prayer together, asking God that we will learn how to offer hospitality to others. Pray together the ***Lord's Prayer***.

## Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A Making the Connection (Grades 4, 5, and 6)

### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 10:37-42*

Jesus outlines the costs and rewards of discipleship.

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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. ***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. ***The expression, “we have come to a crossroad,” means that one has travelled 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. ***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. ***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. ***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. ***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.***

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.  
And kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.  
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit  
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.  
In the same Spirit  
help us to relish what is right  
and always rejoice in your consolation.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.