

## Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

### Readings and Background

#### This Sunday's Readings

##### First Reading

*Jeremiah 20:10-13*

Jeremiah expresses confidence that the Lord will protect him.

##### Responsorial Psalm

*Psalm 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35*

God responds to the prayers of those in need.

##### Second Reading

*Romans 5:12-15*

Sin came into the world through one person; so salvation came through one person for many.

##### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 10:26-33*

Jesus assures the Twelve that God cares about them.

#### Background on the Gospel Reading

We read today's Gospel in the context of last week's Gospel in which ***Jesus sent the twelve disciples to proclaim the kingdom of heaven.***

In between last week's reading and today's reading, ***Jesus has predicted that the disciples will face difficulties in their mission.*** Many people will not receive them well, even within the land of Israel. Even ***family members will turn away from the disciples because of the disciples' commitment to Jesus*** and the kingdom.

***Today's Gospel offers the disciples consolation against this difficult truth.***

This section of Matthew's Gospel should be read in the context of Matthew's intended audience, a *Jewish-Christian community*.

The Gospel alludes to the dangers and persecutions that this community has most likely already faced and will continue to face. **To reassure this community, Matthew recalls for them the encouraging words of Jesus that we read today.**

In this Gospel passage, Jesus might be understood as ***putting suffering in perspective.*** The disciples of Jesus are called upon to keep their focus on God. ***Those who can harm the body do not have ultimate power; God does.*** Still persecution and suffering cannot be avoided or prevented. But Jesus reassures his disciples that ***God knows and cares about what happens to his children.***

We might not face the same type of persecution, but we do experience difficulties as we endeavour to live a Christian life. Sometimes we let the opinions of others prevent us from doing what we know to be right. We need the reminder that ***what God thinks about us is more important. We are reassured by the promise that God cares for us and protects us.***

## Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

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

#### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 10:26-33*

Jesus assures the Twelve that God cares about them.

Young children grow in their faith when they learn to place their needs before a loving God.

#### Materials Needed

- None

#### Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Ask increasingly difficult questions, such as these: ***How many fingers do you have? Have many toes? What colour are your eyes? How many hairs are on your head?***
2. Feign surprise and say: ***What?! You don't know how many hairs are on your head? Who does? Your teacher? Your sisters or brothers? Your parents? Your friends? Well I know who knows!***
3. Read today's Gospel, Matthew 10:26-33.
4. Ask: ***Who knows the number of hairs on our head? (God) That's right, God does. God cares for us so deeply and knows us so well that he even knows the number of hairs on our head. No matter what happens to us, we can trust God to take care of us.***
5. Conclude in prayer together. Invite the children to name ways in which they need God's help. As each need is named, pray together, "God, we trust you because you know us so well." Conclude your prayer by praying the [Glory Be to the Father](#).

## Glory Be to the Father (Doxology)

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.

Amen.

## Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

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

#### Gospel Reading

*Matthew 10:26-33*

Jesus assures the Twelve that God cares about them.

Older children are beginning to move beyond simple childhood fears to experience “grown-up” concerns and worries. We can help them through this time of transition by highlighting God’s care for each person.

#### Materials Needed

- None

#### Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings

1. Ask the group to name some things that people fear. Then ask: ***What are some things people do to calm their fears?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.)
2. Say: ***In today’s Gospel, Jesus talks to his disciples about fear. What might Jesus’ disciples have been afraid of?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.) ***Let’s listen carefully to today’s Gospel to hear what Jesus tells them.***
3. Invite one or more volunteers to read today’s Gospel, Matthew 10:26-33.
4. Ask: ***From this reading, what kind of fears do you think Jesus was talking about?*** (persecution for one’s beliefs) ***What reassurance does Jesus give to his disciples?*** (God knows our fears. We are valuable to God. If we persevere during persecution, we will be rewarded.)
5. Ask: ***Is it easy to stand up for what one believes?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.) ***What challenges have you had to face when standing up for your beliefs?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.) ***What reassurance do you hear in this Gospel for these challenges?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.)
6. Conclude in prayer together for the strength to remain faithful to Jesus and the Gospel, even when it is difficult. Pray together the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

**Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A**  
**Making the Connection (Grades 7 and 8)**  
**Gospel Reading**  
*Matthew 10:26-33*  
Jesus assures the Twelve that God cares about them.

Young people at this age understand that their actions have consequences; choosing one way precludes going another. Choosing to follow Christ means giving up things in order to gain eternal life.

**Materials Needed**

- None

**Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings**

1. Ask the young people to count the number of hairs on their heads. If they laugh or question you, look like you are serious.
2. As they begin to count, tell them to quit when they have reached 100.
3. Ask: ***How much of your head do the 100 strands cover?*** (a very small area)
4. Say: ***Jesus tells us that the Father knows the number of hairs on our heads.***
5. Ask: ***What does that tell us about God's relationship to us? What does that mean to you?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.)
6. Ask a young person to read the Gospel for this Sunday, Matthew 10:26-33.
7. Say: ***Jesus tells us to not be afraid to proclaim the kingdom of heaven. What kinds of things today might make us afraid? Why?*** (Accept all reasonable answers.)
8. Jesus reminds us that acknowledging him is more important than what other people do to us or think about us. He also reminds us that God cares for us. Therefore, we should not fear.
9. Say: ***Someone who tells us that we have no reason to fear is saying that we can trust him or her. We express our trust in God whenever we pray the Creed. To proclaim that we believe in God the Father, in Jesus the Son, and in the Holy Spirit is to say that we trust the Holy Trinity and have no fear.***
10. Conclude by praying together either the [Apostles' Creed](#) or the [Nicene Creed](#).

### **Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

### **Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.  
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

***and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.***

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.