

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Read aloud: 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14
2 Thessalonians 2:16—3:5

Gospel: Luke 20:27-38



Dress Father for Mass according to the liturgical season.

The Pauline kids arrived in the living room for the Gospel reading this Sunday morning. Scattered across the living room floor were jugs, Hula-Hoops, and several stuffed animals. "Either we forgot to clean up last night," Vincent whispered to the others, "or Dad is going to make a point about the Gospel!"

"With this stuff?" Mary Clare whispered back, jokingly.

Dad sat down on the couch and read the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 20, Verses 27 through 38. The Gospel this morning told the story of the Sadducees. The Sadducees did not believe that there was an afterlife to this one. The question about the widow and the brothers was posed to try and "pin Jesus to the wall" because they thought it was unanswerable.

"So, Dad," Vincent started, "is all this stuff on the floor meant to represent the widow and the seven brothers? Is this teddy bear supposed to be the widow?" Vincent laughed as he picked up the bear and began to dance with it.

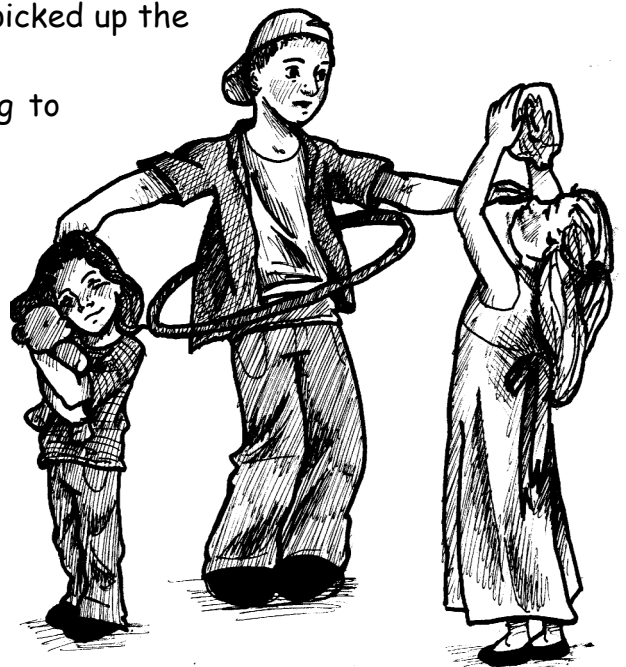
"No, Vincent," Dad chuckled. "We are going to *measure* a few things with these. Now, let me see ..."

Dad got up and picked up the Hula-Hoop.

"Okay, Mary Clare," he stated, "I want you to weigh your brother Ben with this Hula-Hoop."

Mary Clare looked at Dad with a blank expression on her face. "What?" she asked. "How can you weigh someone with a Hula-Hoop? Don't you need a scale for that?"

So, Dad went on to Lucy, "Okay, Lucy, I want you to see how well Vincent has learned his algebra this week by using this plastic jug!"



Lucy started to giggle. "Dad!" she said. "You can only measure something like algebra by using a test! A jug won't tell you anything!"

So, Lucy sat down with the rest of the kids, still giggling and trying to figure out what Dad was up to.

Then Dad said to Hillary, "Okay, Hillary, I want you to take all of these stuffed teddy bears and tell me how old I am!"

Hillary got an ear-to-ear grin. "Dad, you can only measure how old you are by figuring it out on a calendar! My bears are only to cuddle with!"

"That's right, Hillary," Dad cautioned, "but only here on earth ... "

Mom smiled as she added, "Your dad's trying to give you a sense of what Jesus was telling the Sadducees."

"That's right!" Dad agreed. "The Sadducees were apparently unable to imagine any life different from this world. They figured that, even if there *was* an afterlife, the exact same standards would exist. They gave Jesus a situation where a woman marries one brother, they have no children, he dies, she marries the other brother, no children, then this brother dies, and on and on through seven brothers. So, then, when she dies, whose wife is she?"

"But then Jesus comes along and tells the Sadducees to look at things in a new and different way!" Vincent piped in.

"That's it, Vincent!" Dad stated. "Heaven is a different world than here on earth. What applies here in our physical world may not apply there in our spiritual existence!"

Mom went on. "Because there is no death, there aren't any marriages and births to keep creation continuing from generation to generation. So Jesus told the Sadducees that, if the woman was found just, she would enter heaven, and if each of the brothers were found just, they would enter heaven. Everyone would praise God forever and ever in a perfect kingdom!"

"That sounds fun!" Hillary exclaimed.

"And remember," Dad said, quoting 1 Corinthians 2:9, " *'What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him!'* "

"Oh, boy!" Vincent yelled, as he took a turn swirling the Hula-Hoop, "I'm going!"

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Discuss with your family how life in heaven is going to be different than life here on earth.