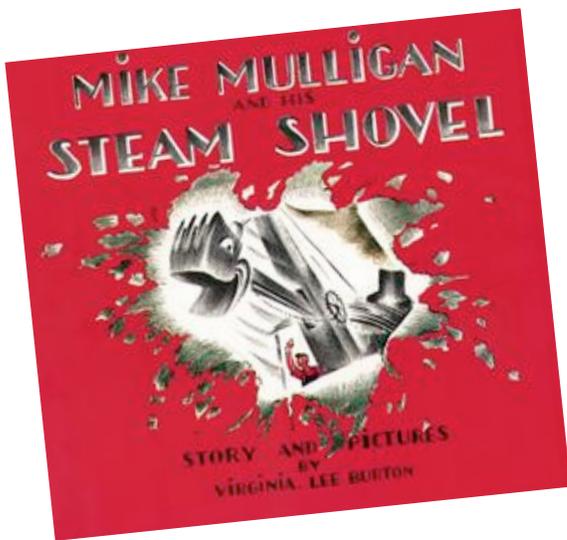




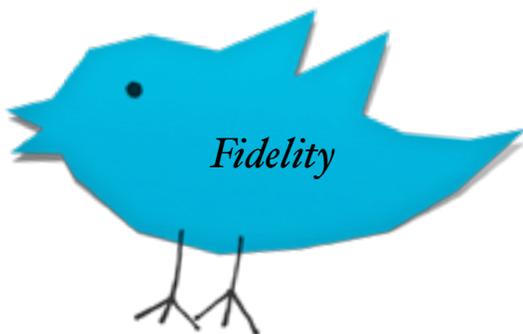
build. plant. grow.
the word this week



ordinary
time



lectionary
reading



Cycle C

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary 147

Reading I: Exodus 17: 8-13

In this reading from Exodus there is a war being waged by Amalek against the nation of Israel. Moses, the leader of Israel chosen by God, stands with the staff of God in his hand as he views the ongoing battle. As long as Moses keeps the staff of God raised, the Israelites do well in battle, however when Moses tires and lowers the staff the the battle turns to Amalek. Moses enlists the help of Aaron and Hur to keep the staff aloft. Moses' **fidelity** to doing as God instructs provides victory to the Israelites. Moses receives the support of Aaron and Hur to maintain **fidelity** to God' instruction.

Reading 2: 2nd Timothy 3: 14-4: 2

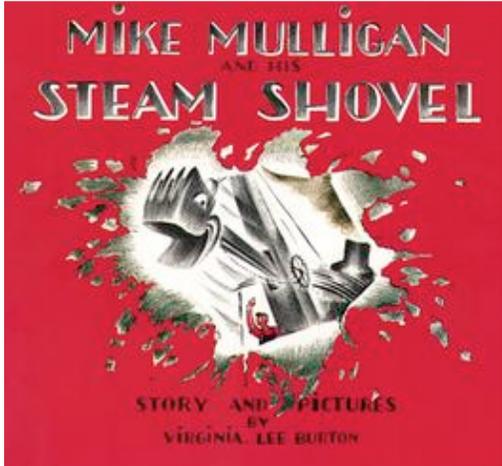
Saint Paul speaks of **fidelity** to Timothy in this second letter addressed to him and the faith community he leads. He reminds Timothy that there should be no question about remaining **faithful** to the tradition left to him since he well knows who taught him and that the source of the teaching came from the inspired Scriptures.

Gospel: Luke 18: 1-8

Jesus speaks of a woman who is persistent in seeking a judgement from a judge who has kept putting off making a judgement on the woman's behalf. The woman remains constant in her pursuit and eventually the judge relents and provides a judgement. The judge renders a judgement, not because he is just, but because he has been worn down by the woman and fears that if he doesn't respond the woman might do him harm. Jesus takes this opportunity to speak to the importance of remaining persistent in our prayer. Most especially, Jesus encourages us to remain **faithful** to our pursuit of justice. **Fidelity** to living a life rooted in justice is essential to living as a follower of Jesus Christ.



children's
story



Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel

Written by Virginia Lee Burton

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character
education
activity

Fidelity or Faithfulness are virtues that are defined by trusting that God will always provide for our greater good.

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel

This story was first published in 1939 and has delighted generations. Since Mike and his trusty steam shovel, Mary Anne, dig deep canals for boats to travel through, cut mountain passes for trains, and hollow out cellars for city skyscrapers. They are absolutely devoted to one another and believe in one another. With progress comes new machines, and soon the inseparable duo are out of work. The **fidelity** they have to one another is revealed throughout the story. Mike believes Mary Anne can dig as much in a day as one hundred men can dig in a week, and the two have one more chance to prove it to save Mary Anne from the scrap heap. What happens next in the small town of Popperville is a testament to their friendship, **fidelity**, and to old fashioned hard work and ingenuity.

Being **faithful** to a friend is a very important quality for all of us. The greatest friendship we can foster is our friendship with God. Throughout the Scriptures we see God always remaining faithful. God's **fidelity** to the nation of Israel as seen in the story from Exodus and God's commitment and **fidelity** to justice in the story about the woman and the judge are but two examples of God's fidelity to us. We are called to be God's image by being **faithful** to living a life rooted in justice.

In the Exodus story we see that Moses receives the assistance of both Aaron and Hur. This can represent the fact that it takes a community of others to assist us in remaining faithful. As in any of the virtues of living a good life we need the help of others to do so. The Church was established to do just that!

Activity

Sometimes we talk or think about an object as if it were a human being. We may even give it a name. Mike Mulligan named his steam shovel Mary Anne. We talk about an object's feelings or emotions. In the story we see that Mary Anne is very sad when all the jobs are taken from her. Draw a picture of something you use everyday. Make sure you include human features, such as eyes and ears, hair and hands, etc. Give it a name and write about things that you and your object do together. Tell how each of you feels.



case study

God's fidelity to us reminds us that we should never fear and unknown future with a known God, a God who loves us unconditionally.



closing tool



Character Education from the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics
ethics programs for communities that learn, live, pray, or work together

www.scu.edu/character

What could you do today?

You and your team have just lost a big tournament game because of some errors made by one of your teammates, who happens to be a friend of yours. The other members of the team are very disappointed and they show their disappointment by ignoring and not speaking to the teammate who made the errors that lost the game. You are faced with being faithful to your friend or joining the rest of the team in making the teammate feel bad about the loss. What will you do? The team is going to one of the kid's house for a swimming party to lift their spirits but they refuse to invite your friend. You are invited but you see how sad and disappointed your friend is. What will you do?

Look Feel Know Act

In life we are given many opportunities to understand what it is to be **faithful**. We know that God is always faithful to us even if we, through human weakness, are not always **faithful** to God. Can you recall a time when someone was unfaithful to you? What did it feel like? Can you recall a time when you were unfaithful to someone close to you? What did it feel like when you knew that the person was affected by your lack of **fidelity** to them?

Throughout the Bible we see many stories about God's faithfulness to us and equally we see as many stories and examples of when we have been less than faithful to God. Can you recall stories or examples of either situation?

Forgiveness and being open to forgiving others is a central theme of the preaching and teaching of Jesus. Often times people hear the saying "forgive and forget." Forgiving is a process and does not happen over night but forgetting an injury or wrongdoing is not something most human being are able to do. The phrase that might better serve us would be "forgive and remember that God has forgiven you."

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

In *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, we encounter a story about a person who is absolutely connected to his steam shovel, Mary Anne, because they have been together and have worked with one another for a long time. Although Mary Anne the steam shovel, is not a person, the virtues of fidelity and faithfulness come through when their relationship is endangered by changing times and circumstances. Often in life we have changing times and circumstances and those times might challenge our relationship with God. However, it is very important to remember that God is always the same, always loving, and always faithful to us. We are to strive to be faithful to God and to living a life of goodness and **fidelity** to justice.

Pray that you will work through challenging times by always praying to God and asking for God's assistance when change comes your way. Pray also that you will be strong in your faith and your commitment to living a just and peaceful life.



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the word this week