

## Cycle C

### Second Sunday of Advent

Lectionary #6

#### Reading I: Baruch 5:1-9

The nation of Israel has been held captive by the Babylonians and have begun to question their identity as a nation. They wonder whether God has abandoned them because they have taken being God's chosen people for granted. The prophet Baruch addresses this feeling of hopelessness and abandonment and attempts to bring comfort by using the image of the cloak that can be wrapped around people to bring warmth. The people who are described as *wrapped in garment of gloom* are told by the prophet that they need to remove this garment and allow it to be replaced with a new garment of **hope**. Baruch assures the people of Israel that they have not been forgotten by God.

#### Reading 2: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

It is important to know that Saint Paul writes this letter that is full of **hope** while he is imprisoned. Even while he awaits his fate of release or execution, he remains **hopeful**, because his **hope** is rooted in his relationship with Jesus. As he writes, he does not focus on his own situation but acts as a minister of **hope** to the people. He demonstrates to the people of Philippi that **hope** is always something that can be held on to, especially in times of trials. This letter echoes the **hope** that prophet Baruch speaks to the people of Israel in the first reading.

#### Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Saint Luke begins by listing the people of power in his day, and by doing so, he makes a statement that these powers—royal, religious, and political—are not the source of **hope** for the people. The person who announces the advent of the Messiah, the **hope** of Israel, is a prophet living alone in the desert. Saint John the Baptist is clearly not one of the power holders, yet he is the one who announces and bears **hope** of the new world order. This new kingdom will be filled with **hope**, mercy, and love.

build. plant. grow.  
*the word this week*



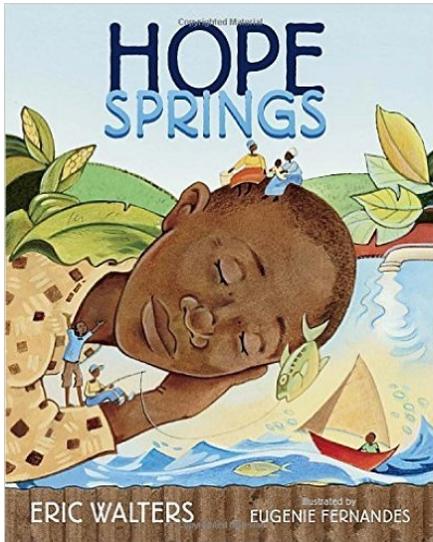
advent



lectionary  
reading



## children's story



### *Hope Springs*

Written by Eric Walters

Illustrated by Eugenie Fernandes

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character  
education  
activity

**Hope is a strong and confident expectation that is rooted in one's trust in the word of God.**

## Hope Springs

In *Hope Springs*, a great drought has settled around the orphanage where the main character, Boniface, lives. The people wait desperately in long lines to draw water from a tiny spring. Boniface and other orphans are waiting in line when they are suddenly pushed to the back of the line. Boniface is confused by this, because he has learned the importance of sharing. When he discusses this with his house parent, Henry, he is told how unkindness and selfishness come out of fear. Later, after a well has been built at the orphanage, Boniface has an idea that will help all the villagers who are in need of water. This story is full of **hope** that comes when a young boy realizes that when fear is countered with kindness, wonderful things can happen.

## Clothing in Hope

This project is directly connected to the first reading from the prophet Baruch, as he presents the image of a people being clothed in **hope**.

Step One: Do some research in your community and see if there is a project called *One Warm Coat*. If so, invite a representative from the program to come talk to the students. If this program does not exist where you live, find out if there is a shelter that is in need of warm clothing for the winter months.

Step Two: Invite the students to talk to their family, friends, and neighbors to see if they have any gently used coats, scarves, socks, mittens, gloves, sweatshirts, or other warm clothing to donate to this project.

Step Three: Ask the students if they can describe what it feels like to be cold. Let them know that by collecting and donating warm clothes, they are providing **hope** for people who might be suffering.

Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not, remember that what you now have was once among those things you hoped for.  
-Epicurus



case study

Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.

## What could you do today?

As a family project, it might be fun to ask your family members to look in their closets and find things that they haven't worn for a long time. If these items are in good shape, they could be donated in order to provide someone else with nice clothes to wear. Many years ago, a saint named Origen said *the cloak that is hanging in your closet unused could be keeping someone else warm*. By donating your unused clothes, you are giving someone in need the chance to have warmth and comfort and offering them a piece of **hope** that others care for their well-being.

## Look Feel Know Act

Notice the many people that God places in your path every day, including people who you do not know well. Whether the person is familiar, an acquaintance, or a stranger, they may be in need of a warm hello or a friendly smile. A simple act of kindness can offer people **hope**.

Think of a time when something as simple as a smile or a hello brightened your day. With this in mind, make a commitment to yourself and to God that you will be a bearer of **hope** to others. Know that your simple and friendly acts of kindness—such as a hello or a smile, could bring **hope** to people you encounter on a daily basis.

Just as the prophet Baruch and the apostle Paul brought **hope** to the people they encountered, so too does Boniface bring **hope** to others by working to do good despite the unkind actions of others. The readings for this Sunday and the story *Hope Springs* show God's grace at work through people's actions to bring **hope** to others, which is what we are called to do as well.



closing  
tool

**Loving God, help me to be a bearer of your hope to those who I encounter each day, through a smile, a gesture, or an act of kindness. Amen.**



**Santa Clara  
University**

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