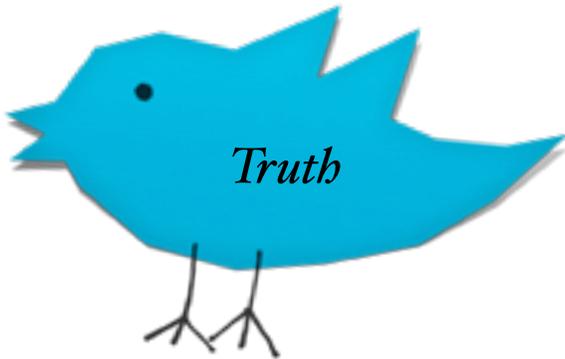




build. plant. grow.
the word this week



easter



lectionary
reading

Cycle A

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Lectionary # 52

Reading I: Acts 6:1-7

Reality sets in when there is advancement and growth in any movement and this is true for the fledgling church. The church is growing and with that growth comes problems and challenges that accompany success. It is crucial to look at all situations *truthfully*. The **truth**, as illustrated in this reading, is that some in the community are being neglected and by recognizing this fact an opportunity is realized and a new ministry emerges. Recognition of **truth** paves the way for the selection of persons to perform a duty that will free the apostles to focus on preaching the word of God. The church is an organization and there will be need for various roles and responsibilities to ensure that the organization can grow and evolve to provide for a diversity of needs.

Reading 2: 1 Peter 2: 4-9

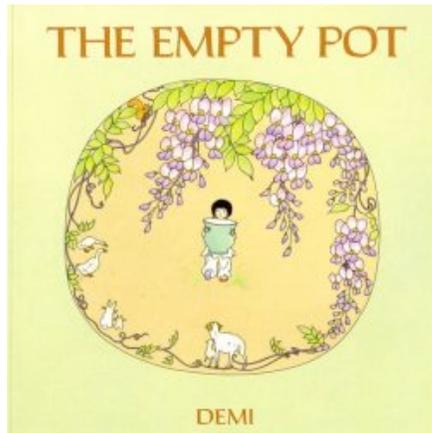
Saint Peter borrows the concept of persons as “living stones” from the Psalms. This reading continues the theme of a community coming together to be built into a “spiritual house.” Clearly any healthy growth and development is rooted in **truthfulness**. Time and again in the scriptures there will be an emphasis placed on the deep and abiding need for **truth** as the basis for the Christian life. If we use the same image as Saint Peter, then we are to be “living stones” that construct the spiritual house in which **truth** must be a part of the mortar holding the house together!

Gospel: John 14: 1-12

The ultimate **truth** is Jesus Christ himself. This passage is filled with many great **truths**. Jesus is absolutely honest in his invitation to follow him. He provides no “small print” but rather presents each with an invitation that **truthfully** reveals what the cost would be for following him. He says expect pain and glory. Yet another **truth** is that Jesus goes before us, preparing the way and being the way. Jesus as the **truth** is the most explicit self-expression we can have of God.



children's story



The Empty Pot

Written by Demi

Illustrated by Demi

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character
education
activity

**Truth is that which is
consistent with the mind, will,
character, glory and being of
God. Truth is the self-
expression of God.**

The Empty Pot

This ancient Chinese folktale follows a young boy named Ping in his journey to do his absolute best in being **truthful**. Ping happens to love growing flowers as did the mighty Emperor in the story. The Emperor was seeking to choose an heir and he decided that the flowers should have a role in choosing who his heir would be. He provided flower seeds to all the children of his realm and said *whoever can provide for the most most beautiful bloom in a year's time shall succeed me to the throne*. Ping tried everything to make his seed grow but it simply would not grow. Eventually the year passed and Ping, along with the other children brought their pots to the Emperor. Everyone had beautiful blossoms but not Ping, his pot was empty. The Emperor chooses Ping because he knew that Ping was the one who was being **truthful**. The seeds the Emperor had provided had been cooked and therefore were not capable of growing. All the children, but Ping, had replaced the original seed that was given to them when they saw that it was not growing. Ping remained honest and **truthful**. It was Ping's being **true** to himself that was the true prize.

Activity

Step One: After the students have had the opportunity to hear the story of *The Empty Pot*, ask the students to think about a time when they told the **truth** and something good occurred because of their honesty. Pair the students and instruct them to tell their partner their story.

Step Two: Ask the students to recall a story of when they did not tell the **truth** and the consequences for not being **truthful**. Using the same partners have them tell their story to one another.

Jesus say in the gospel of Saint John that “he is the way, the truth and the life. To follow Jesus we must be people of truth.



case study

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

What could you do today?

Interview your parents or another adult regarding a time when they were honest and the good that resulted from being **truthful**. Ask them if they would be willing to share a story with you of when they did not tell the **truth** and what consequence resulted from not telling the **truth**.

After hearing these stories and some of your own, make a commitment to yourself to strive to be a person of **truth**. Ask the Holy Spirit that dwells within you to help you be **truthful** in all situations.

Look Feel Know Act

Not telling the **truth** is like having a ghost following you all the time. Any untruth we have involved ourselves in can haunt us and threaten each moment of our lives and sap us of the joyfully life God wants us to live. The **truth** will always surface eventually and all we need do is look around us and see that fact in the news. Dishonesty, no matter how long ago it occurred will be revealed in the light of the **truth**. Jesus say that the *truth will set us free*. **Truth** is the only healthy way to approach life and most especially in all of our relationships. Healthy and solid relationships are founded on **truth**. Commit yourself to being a person of **truth**.

Ping, in the story of *The Empty Pot*, revealed truth and honesty even when faced with failure and the embarrassment that often accompanies failure. Ping, with the direction and encouragement of his mother comes to understand that the real value and success in life is be **truthful**, a person of integrity. Jesus, throughout the gospels, encourages everyone to be of the **truth**, to always seek the **truth** about themselves and in doing so will know true freedom.



**closing
tool**

Pray that you will give thanks to God for striving to be a person of truth and that you will always seek truth in your daily life. Amen.



**Santa Clara
University**

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