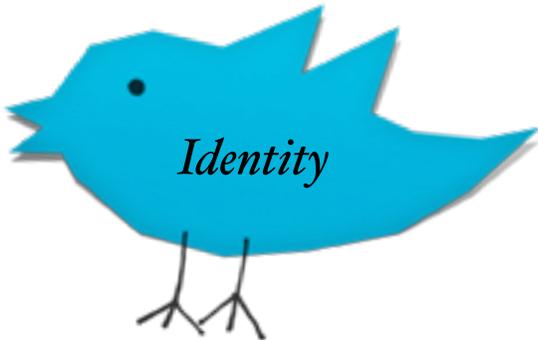




build. plant. grow.
the word this week



ordinary
time



lectionary
reading

Cycle A

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary #121

Reading I: Isaiah 22: 19-23

Our identity and integrity are contingent upon having congruency between who we say we are and how we conduct our lives. Eliakim is called to take the place of Shebna who has not been faithful in his duties. In this passage, we see what happens when individuals who do not live up to the expectations that God has given them regarding their role in life. We are all called to be people of integrity and that integrity is absolutely intertwined with our true **identity**. The question is placed before us, just like those we read about in the scriptures: *Are we who we say we are?*

Reading 2: Romans 11: 33-36

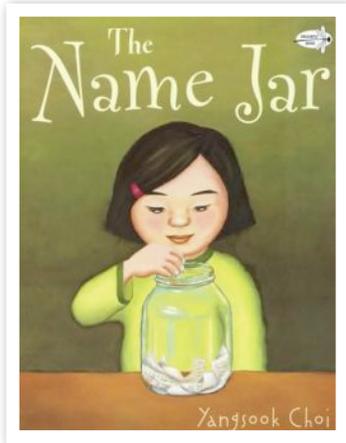
We encounter Saint Paul struggling with a bittersweet reality over these several weeks: while his own people have rejected Christ, pagans have embraced him. Saint Paul comes to the realization that his **identity** is very much tied to bringing the Gentiles to faith in Jesus Christ. Saint Paul understands that God is working in ways that he will never completely understand so he decides to trust in God's providence for his life and ministry. Trusting in God becomes central in his life as well as in his **identity**.

Gospel: Matthew 16: 13-20

In this passage from Saint Matthew's gospel we see clearly that Jesus knows who he is and what his purpose is. When spurred on by Peter to avoid being who he has been called to be, he rebukes Peter for trying to derail him. Jesus is the most **integrated** individual who ever walked the earth. His humanity was one that lived fully and completely for the will of the Father. He knew this to be his call and there were many opportunities throughout his life where he was tempted to move in a direction that was not his call. Each and every time he remained faithful to his call and thus his **integrity** remained intact. We are each challenged to be, as was Jesus, truly *who we say we are!*



children's
story



The Name Jar

Written by Yangsook Choi

Illustrated by Yangsook Choi

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character
education
activity

When we are baptized we are given a name and that becomes an essential part of our identity. One of the first things we do when meeting another person is the exchange of names.

The Name Jar

Our name is an essential part of our identity. In *The Name Jar* the reader is introduced to a young girl who recently arrived in the United States from Korea. Her Korean name is *Unhei* (pronounced Yoon-hye), which means *grace*. She feels awkward about it after experiencing some teasing on her bus ride to school. When asked her name in the classroom she says she hasn't decided on an American name. Thus, the children in the classroom establish a Name Jar containing all kinds of suggested names. As the story progresses, Unhei comes to understand the importance of her name from conversations with her mother and grandmother. With the support of her friends and family Unhei chooses to keep her own name and uses the beautiful name stamp given to her by her grandmother.

Activity

Step One: The students will have the opportunity to tell the story of their name. They can then share how they received their name, and the story behind how they got their name. If they are not certain of this information, Step Two will have to wait until the next day after interviewing their parents about the history of their naming.

Step Two: Each student will then make a tented name plate that will display their name on one side and the history on the other side of the tented name plate.

Step Three: Additionally the students will print their name in block letters in a vertical direction. Then, they will use each letter of their name as part of a word that describes them. For example:

Nice
smArt
Talented
cAring
Loving
frIendly
athEletic

A covenant is an agreement between God and His people that binds one to another and the binding force in this covenant is LOVE.



case study

**Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.**

What could you do today?

Now that you know the history of your name, do some research about what your name means. There is usually a language or culture of origin that creates the root of the name. Names are often associated with some virtue. Learn about this virtue or attribute and see if it is a good fit for you or something you would like to strive for in your life. If your name is totally original, then give a virtuous meaning that is important to you. When you introduce yourself you can share with people the background and meaning of your name.

Look Feel Know Act

Throughout the Bible we see the importance of names and naming. In the Old Testament we see that Abram's name is changed to Abraham when he chosen by God to be the Father of a new nation. In the New Testament we see a change in Saint Paul's name from Saul to Paul once he has had an experience of the Risen Christ.

Cultivate an appreciation for your baptismal name and for your family name (that is your family's last name). Strive to make sure that your words and actions bring honor to your name and your family's name.

The Name Jar is a beautiful story about an individual coming to an appreciation for their name and recognizing that their name is an essential part of their identity. Throughout the Scriptures there is great importance given to names and the process of being named. Often times we encounter a name change when an individual is called by God to a new way of life and living. There are several examples besides the ones mentioned above. In both the distant past and present, when an individual is confirmed in their faith they will often choose a name based on a saint who exemplifies virtues that the person holds as valuable.



**closing
tool**

Pray that you will see the great dignity of your name as the unique image of God that you are. Pray that you will strive to be the very best you can be. Amen.



**Santa Clara
University**

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

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