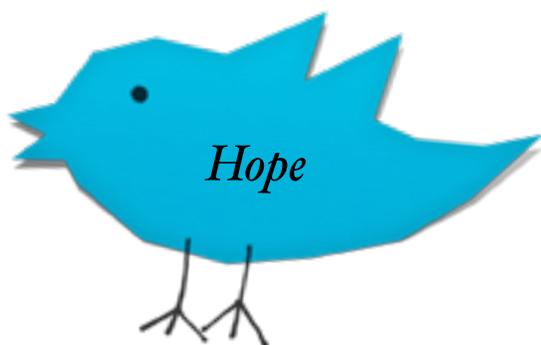




ordinary
time



lectionary
reading

Cycle B

Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #98

Reading I: Wisdom 1: 13-15; 2: 23-24

The writer of the Book of Wisdom is seeking to bring **hope** and comfort to the Jews suffering from oppression and persecution while living in Alexandria, Egypt. The writer wishes to remind them and us that God is a God of life and that we are created in God's own image. This in itself is the basis for our **hope** that God will not allow the power of death to have the last word. We see here and throughout the Scriptures that it is part of God's plan for us to share in God's life forever. God who created all things always wields greater power than the powers of sin and death.

Reading 2: 2 Corinthians 8: 7, 9, 13-15

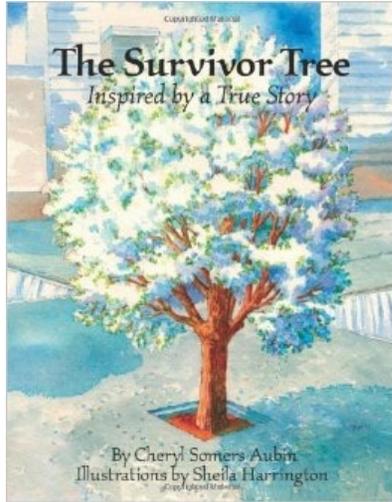
This segment of Saint Paul's letter requests help from the Church at Corinth for another Church that is unknown to them but that is made up of their brothers and sisters in faith. Saint Paul stresses that the love of Christ is the driving force of his ministry and is the goal of all Christian service. This passage invites the Church at Corinth to be a source of **hope** for others who are struggling. Saint Paul's efforts to collect funds for the Church in Jerusalem is concrete evidence that we are called to be **hope** for others and that **hope** is intimately connected with the virtues of faith and love.

Gospel: Mark 5: 21-43

There is no question that **hope** is the theme for the two stories in today's Gospel. Jairus trusts and **hopes** that Jesus will help to save the life of his daughter, and the woman with the hemorrhage trusts that she will be healed if she touches the hem of Jesus' garment. Both individuals put their faith into action and in doing so, open up space for God to work wonders for them.



children's story



The Survivor Tree: Inspired by a True Story

Written by Cheryl Somers Aubin

Illustrated by Sheila Harrington

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character
education
activity

**Hope is being able to see that
there is light despite all of the
darkness.
Archbishop Desmond Tutu**

The Survivor Tree

Hope is absolutely the dominant theme of the *Survivor Tree*. This story takes the reader on a journey of hope and healing that parallels our own nation's journey following the events of September 11, 2001. For one month, a 20 year old pear tree lay underneath the smoking rubble of the collapsed World Trade Center. Scarred, broken, and burnt, it was rescued by site workers and taken to a nursery to be nurtured back to health. As it slowly heals, the tree recalls its previous life in New York City, noting the people and events it experienced. Finally, in December 2010, the tree, known as the Survivor Tree, is replanted at the 9/11 Memorial Plaza, where its presence is a symbol of **hope** and resilience.

Activity: Tree of Hope

Step One: On a bulletin board or one of the classroom walls, construct a tree trunk and branches using brown construction paper or foam board. Make sure the tree has no leaves as the students will be given green construction paper leaves to place on the tree.

Step Two: Provide the students with two or more leaves on which they will write one **hope** for themselves and one or more hopes that they have for the world.

Step Three: Design a prayer service during which students can place their leaves on the tree. Each day, you may wish to focus on one of the **hopes** in the class's daily prayer.

**Hope is like the sun,
which, as we journey
towards it, casts the
shadow of our burdens
behind us.**
Samuel Smiles



case study

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

What could you do today?

Think about how you feel when someone smiles at you, says *Hello*, and asks *How are you?* These simple gestures and acts of kindness can actually brighten someone's day and give them **hope**. When we realize this, it may cause us to smile more often and ask individuals, especially those who look sad or troubled, how they are. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, now known as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, would often say that we are all called to do simple things with great love. Make a commitment to smile more often each day and to know that your smile might just be bringing hope to someone.

Look Feel Know Act

Recall a time when you were sad and what it meant when someone noticed your sadness and was willing to listen to you. Think about how much the other person listening to you helped even if they did not take away or fix the thing that was making you sad.

There is something very special about listening to someone and being totally present to them as they are telling you a story. When you have been able to recall this and remember how helpful it can be to listen to someone's sadness, you have entered into the process of bringing **hope** to someone just by listening.

Make a commitment to really listen to others by using active listening techniques, such as making eye contact with the other person when they speak, asking questions, and noticing all that is being told to you with both your mind and your heart. After listening to their story, make sure you pray for the person as well. One of the very important ways that you can bring **hope** to others is to remember them in your prayers.

In the story of *The Survivor Tree*, **hope** abounds and becomes a sign and symbol of God's love in the world. The tree surviving with the help of those who nurtured it back to health stands to remind us of the resiliency that is part of the human spirit with the help and assistance of God. The two individuals in the Gospel needed help, and this help came through the person of Jesus Christ. We are called to bring **hope** and healing to those who the Lord sends our way.



**closing
tool**

A very common and simple prayer with hope as its theme goes like this:

Lord, help me to remember that nothing is going to happen to me today that you and I cannot handle together. Amen.



**Santa Clara
University**

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