



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



ordinary  
 time



lectionary  
 reading

## Cycle B

### Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary 68

#### Reading I: Jonah 3: 1-5, 10

In this particular section of the book of the prophet Jonah we see God calling Jonah a second time to be a prophet to the Assyrians, and this time Jonah responds **obediently**. In fact, although Jonah did not initially want to warn the Assyrians that they need to repent of their sins, his words touch the hearts of the Assyrians so fully that they all convert to God's will and do penance. The **obedience** of the Assyrians so moves God that he refrains from allowing any disaster to fall upon them. This repentant response of the Assyrians stands in sharp contrast to the nation of Israel. The lesson here is that God's compassion and forgiving love is available to those who choose to be faithful and **obedient**.

#### Reading 2: 1 Corinthians 7: 29-31

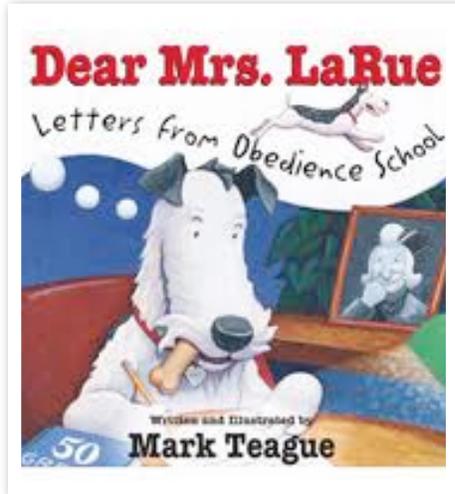
Saint Paul speaks of the great importance of being **obedient** and faithful within the context of God's plan for each individual's life. Ultimately the message for all of us is to be honorable people in our state in life. Saint Paul emphasizes the importance of living life joyfully with our focus being on our life that goes beyond the physical constraints or distractions of the world. It is God's intention that we enjoy the creation that He brought about by an act of love. However, creation gives us but a glimpse of the everlasting life that God intends for us.

#### Gospel: Mark 1: 14-20

Here begins what is known as the genesis of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee, which also includes the call of the first disciples. The disciples, according to Saint Mark's account, respond immediately and without hesitation. It is essential to remember that Saint Mark's gospel is the earliest and focuses on the essentials of the Good News. The immediate response of the disciples to Jesus' call is clearly indicative of the importance of **obedience** in following Jesus Christ. Not only is **obedience** important for the first disciples but it also applies to present day followers of Jesus.



children's  
story



### Dear Mrs. LaRue; Letters from Obedience School

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character  
education  
activity

**The word "obey" is derived from the Latin word "obedire", which means to pay attention to, to give ear to, literally to listen to.**

## Dear Mrs. LaRue

After numerous incidents of bad behavior, Mrs. LaRue decides to send her dog Ike to obedience school. *Dear Mrs. LaRue* is a hilarious account of the ire felt by Ike for being sent to obedience school. In various letters written to Mrs. LaRue, Ike describes the obedience school as if it were a prison when in fact is more like a spa! Ike's descriptions of the obedience school are illustrated in black and white while the real world of the obedience school is depicted in color. The author presents the story in the form of a series of very funny and entertaining letters that Ike writes to Mrs. LaRue in order to get released from his "his prison." It is a light hearted story that represents the importance of being **obedient** and the process of learning to be **obedient**.

## Activity

This activity is best done outside given its nature and design. The activity is best known by the title *Red Light/Green Light*

Step One: Listening and seeing are important aspects of being **obedient**. In this activity an individual in the class plays the role of the "traffic cop."

Provide the "traffic cop" with a stop sign (RED) and a go sign (GREEN). Have the students line up 25 feet away from the "traffic cop." With the "traffic cop's" back to the students the cop will announce "GO" while simultaneously holding up of the green sign and at a given moment say "STOP" while holding up the red sign. The obvious goal is for students to hear and see in order to **obey**.

Step Two: The teacher and/or classroom aid will determine if the students have obeyed by stopping or going when told to. If students do not obey they are asked to leave the line. The first individual who makes it across the space legally (by being **obedient**) becomes the new "traffic cop."

Obedience is not merely following a rule so as to avoid getting in trouble. More importantly, it is to understand and know why following a rule contributes to peace and order within a family and a society.



case study

Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.

## What could you do today?

Enter into a conversation with your parents and discuss the reasons for why there is a particular rule in the house. Listen carefully and try to understand why the rule exists, why it is important, and how it contributes to everyone in the family. Additionally, ask what the consequence would be for not following the rule, not in terms of punishment, but rather how it negatively impacts the family. It is important to remember that rules are much like God's commandments, in that they are present to protect us and help us. Try to understand the family rules so that you can follow them with an informed mind. It is often helpful to follow rules when we understand the reasons for the rules and how following the rules contribute to a safe and peaceful environment.

## Look Feel Know Act

Look at some of the things that are occurring in the world around you, specifically when someone **disobeys** a law. Notice how one person's **disobedience** can affect a great many people. You can see the effects and know that the people may be saddened, hurt, or angered due to the breaking of a rule.

Try and place yourself in the shoes of someone who has been affected by the lack of **obedience** to a rule. How would you feel in the same situation?

Once you have a clearer understanding of how **disobedience** affects others you will be more inclined to listen and see the importance of being **obedient**. Through **obedience**, you can contribute to a kinder and gentler world.

Often, human beings try to make up all kinds of excuses for why they did not **obey** a rule and then try to avoid the consequences for their actions. In *Dear Mrs. LaRue*, we see Ike not wanting to deal with the consequences of having to go to **obedience** school, when in fact he brought it upon himself by his **disobedient** actions disrupting others' lives.

You will notice that in the first reading chosen for this weekend the prophet Jonah finally relents and **obeys** God's call to announce God's word to the people of Ninevah. His **obedience** prevented a disaster falling upon the Ninevah people. The disciples, in **obeying** the call of Jesus, began the process of bringing the Good News to us. The obedience of carrying the Good News throughout the world and the ages has brought about many wonderful things.



closing  
tool

**Pray that you will listen intently to God's movement in your life and pray that you will have the strength and courage to be obedient to God, most especially when others around you may not be listening and obeying God. Amen.**



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