



easter



lectionary
reading

Cycle C

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Lectionary #57

**Reading I: Acts of the Apostles 15:
1-2, 22-29**

This passage shows how the elders of the early Church often put their heads together to **discern** important elements in Church discipline. The age old practice of circumcision was a sign of the covenant between God and humans in the Jewish tradition, and the question now is whether a Gentile entering the Christian religion was to be bound by the Jewish tradition of circumcision. Of course this caused great moments of conflict, and so Saint Paul decided to involve Saint Peter in the conversation so that the **discernment** process would have input by different leaders of the church. This is evidence to the fact that the Church has always seen itself as fully cooperative with the Holy Spirit when people come together to **discern** direction within the church.

**Reading 2: Revelations 21: 10-14,
22-23**

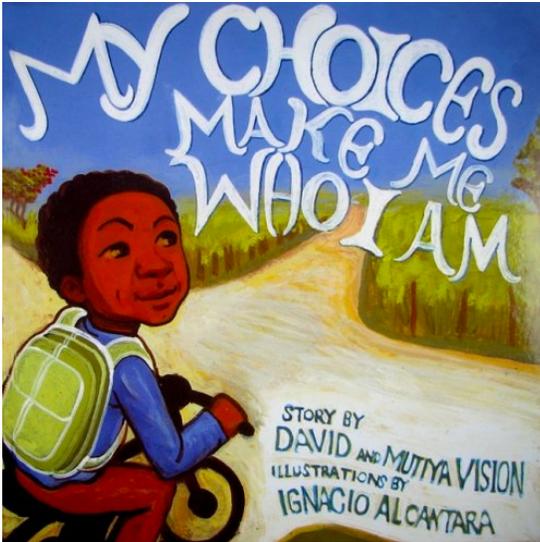
By the time the Book of Revelations was written, the Roman government had all but decimated Jerusalem. The loss of the city and the Temple caused people to question their identity and the loyalty of God. In the midst of this, the author of Revelations is trying to help the people envision a new Jerusalem and a new place of worship that would never be touched by destruction and violence.

Gospel: John 14: 23-29

This passage is a continuation of what is often referred to as the farewell discourse of Jesus. As he prepares to return to the Father, he promises to send the disciples an Advocate, the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that will teach and guide them in their **discernment**. Although the disciples band together out of fear, once the Holy Spirit comes upon them, they become bold in their faith and learn that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, they can **discern** the foundational beginnings of the Church.



children's
story



My Choices Make Me Who I Am

Written by Mutiya Vision and David Vision
Illustrated by Ignacio Alcantara
Publication: 2008, Vision Works Publications
ISBN-10: 0965953825
ISBN-13: 978-0965953825



character
education
activity

**Discernment is calling upon
the Holy Spirit to lead and
give direction.**

My Choices Make Me Who I Am

The authors of this book are the parents of seven children, and so they have great insight and understanding about the challenges children face during all stages of development. *My Choices Make Me Who I Am* tells the inspirational story of how an adolescent boy confronts and adapts to life's daily challenges. Each real life experience gives him the opportunity to make a choice which will ultimately define him as a human being. After careful examination of each situation and a review of the potential rewards and consequences, he learns the importance of making wise choices. This begins the journey of **discernment**.

**Learning About the "C's" in
Good Decision Making**

Step One: Present the students with the seven words that begin with the letter "C" that they will come to relate with the process of making good decisions and **discerning** which actions to take.

The 7 "C" Words: conscience, character, competence, consequences, choices, compassion, and courage

Step Two: Have the students write out one of the words and look up a definition from a dictionary appropriate to their grade level.

Step Three: Invite the students to help each other understand the definitions by talking about the words and using the words in sentences.

Step Four: Using one of the scenarios from *My Choices Make Me Who I Am*, have a discussion with the students about how the 7 "C's" can assist people in making good decisions.

Discernment is the art of speaking directly to God...an art that presupposes knowing how to contemplate, knowing how to see God.
-Marko Ivan Rupnik, SJ



case study

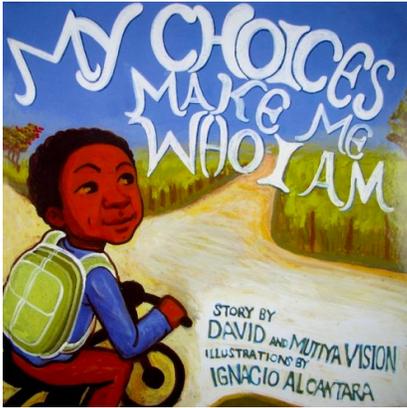
**Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.**

What could you do today?

Ask your parents to help you choose a television program that you can all watch together. While you watch the program, you will want to pay attention to the different characters and whether they make good or bad decisions. Is their behavior thoughtful, or simply reactionary? After viewing the program with your family, talk about the various characters and the good and bad decisions that they made. Discuss how the characters who did not do the right thing could have made another decision that would have resulted in a different outcome.

Look Feel Know Act

Ideally, as we grow in age and wisdom, we have the ability to look back at decisions that we may have made that were not the best choices. Take some time to recall one such decision and try to think about the negative consequences that came as a result of that choice. If you were faced with the same situation now, how would you make a different decision? Learning from our mistakes is one of the great things we can do in life. Remember that as long as you involve God in the process of decision making, you really are being a **discerning** person, which means you are thoughtfully looking at all things as you move forward in life.



Both the readings chosen by the Church for this Sixth Sunday of Easter and the children's book, *My Choices Make Me Who I Am*, emphasize how the choices we make define us. It is important to understand that involving God in the process of **discernment** and decision making will help us make better decisions with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



closing
tool

Loving God, give life to your spirit that dwells within me so that I may have both the mind and heart to discern your will for me throughout my life. Help me to see that the greatest challenges that I face may be my greatest victories in your name. Amen.



**Santa Clara
University**

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