



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



lent



lectionary
reading

Cycle C

First Sunday of Lent

Lectionary #24

Reading I: Deuteronomy 26: 4-10

In this first reading from Deuteronomy, the writer reminds the nation of Israel of God's **faithfulness** to them by recounting the many deeds that God performed for them. In religious traditions, we celebrate what God has done for us throughout history in order to renew our confidence and hope. This is a story of how God delivered a small group of people from oppression and slavery and made them into a great nation. It is a reminder of God's **faithfulness** to us and calls us to be **faithful** to God.

Reading 2: Romans 10: 8-13

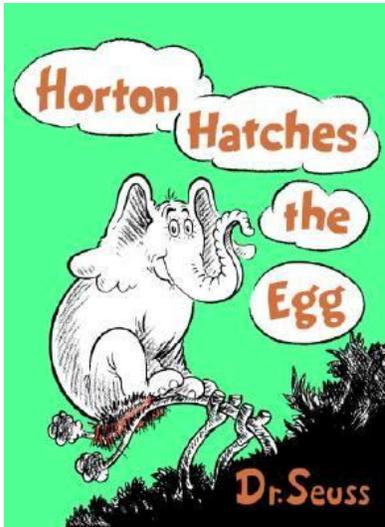
This reading is a joyful declaration of **faithfulness**. Saint Paul argues that in order to be saved, one must *believe* and *confess*. He says that these elements are essential to the virtue of **faithfulness**. It is not enough for any of us to believe solely in our hearts; instead, we must be willing to proclaim the truths about the mysteries of Christ. This belief in Christ, Saint Paul tells us, is transformative. It changes us from speakers into committed doers of God's word. **Faithfulness** is shown through the good works that we perform based on the faith that we speak from our lips and believe in our hearts.

Gospel: Luke 4: 1-13

In today's Gospel, we hear about how the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert where he was tempted by the devil. During these trials and temptations, Jesus demonstrates **faithfulness**, unlike the nation of Israel, who were unfaithful during their time in the desert. Temptations have everything to do with the comforts that we all need and desire. For Jesus, one of these temptations is hunger. However, in the midst of all the temptations presented to Jesus by the devil, Jesus remains steadfast in his **faithfulness**.



children's story



Horton Hatches the Egg

Written by Dr. Seuss

Illustrated by Dr. Seuss

Publication: Random House Book for
Young Readers, 2013

ISBN-10: 03948007X

ISBN-13: 978-0394800776



character
education
activity

**Faithfulness is the constancy
of God's presence and
relationship with each human
being made in God's image and
likeness.**

Horton Hatches the Egg

In "Horton Hatches the Egg" we encounter a kindly elephant who is persuaded to sit on an egg by a mother bird who wishes to have an extended vacation. Little does Horton know that Maysie (the mother bird) is setting off on a permanent vacation in Palm Springs. Horton patiently waits for her return and never leaves the egg unattended even when faced with all kinds of challenges. Horton remains **faithful**. The story illustrates the way that Horton remains steadfast in his **faithfulness**. The story is a true example of what it means to be faithful, especially in the midst of trials and tribulations.

What Does it Mean to be Faithful?

Step One: Read the following discussion questions to start a conversation with the students:

- What is Horton's famous line?
- What does it mean to be **faithful**?
- Does a faithful person agree to do something and then walk away from it?
- Does a faithful person keep a promise even if it is inconvenient?

Step Two: Based on the questions and answers above, invite the students to form groups of three or four and to write a story that illustrates **faithfulness**.

Step Three: Have them illustrate their story and then share their work with the class. This project may take more than one day to complete.

Faithfulness is the quality of being loyal and resolutely staying with a belief without waiver.



case study

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

What could you do today?

With the help of your parents or teacher, make a list of the things that you normally have to do throughout each day. Create a chart so that you are able to keep track of the things that you have and have not accomplished or been **faithful** about completing. Part of the chart should have to do with your relationship with God, such as remembering to do your morning prayers, saying grace before meals, and attending mass with your family. Another part of the chart can deal with remaining **faithful** to other people in your life. For example, you might keep track of the kind things that you do for others. Remember that the Holy Father, Pope Francis, has declared this year to be a Jubilee of Mercy, which means that you are called to go out of your way to do kind things for those around you.

Look Feel Know Act

As you look around, you might notice how **faithfulness** to God and to others is a virtue that brings order and allows things to move smoothly and peacefully. When you feel this inner peace, know that it comes from being **faithful**. Allow yourself to see the wisdom involved in allowing **faithfulness** to guide you in accomplishing things both big and small.

The Scripture readings for this weekend illustrate God's **faithfulness** to humanity. This **faithfulness** is so beautifully and simply presented by Horton as he remains **faithful** to hatching the egg. Remember that just as Horton is faithful, so too is God **faithful** to you 100% of the time, and that he calls you to practice **faithfulness** to him and to your other relationships.



closing
tool

Thank you God for this gift of faith that you have given to me. I promise you I will do everything I can to allow this gift to grow deeper within me and to live in such a way that others will recognize the gift of faith that you have given to me. Amen.



**Santa Clara
University**

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