



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



ordinary  
time



lectionary  
reading

## Cycle C

### Twelfth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #96

#### Reading I: Zechariah 12:10-11, 13:1

The prophet Zechariah begins this passage with words of great **hope** when he says that the Lord will *pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and petition*. After these great words of **hope**, the prophet talks about why the people should be grieving and mourning as a result of their unfavorable behavior. Even in the midst of the unspeakable evils of the past, God always wants to call his people back into right relationship. This ever present love in the midst of failure is clearly indicative of the **hope** that is always possible when we place ourselves in God's hands. One of the greatest leaps of faith is to place **hope** in God no matter what the circumstances are.

#### Reading 2: Galatians 3: 26-29

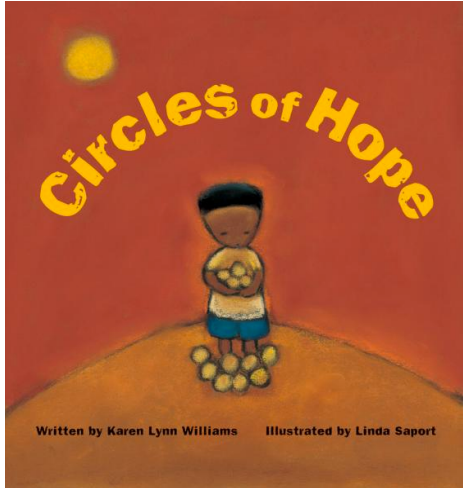
Saint Paul's proclamation in this letter to the people of Galatia presents a great **hope** that is available to all. We see that all are called and included in this **hope** when Saint Paul mentions that there can be no difference among people who profess Jesus Christ as Lord because all are included in the Body of Christ. The **hope** that is expressed here is that God makes no distinction among people, but includes everyone.

#### Gospel: Luke 9: 18-24

Jesus asks us and the disciples who we think he is. Saint Peter responds with his profession of faith by stating that Jesus is *The Christ of God*. After Peter says this, Jesus makes the first prediction of his Passion. There is a similarity between the tone of the first reading and the Gospel selected for this Sunday. Both offer **hope** even in the midst of something hard to hear. Jesus is stating clearly that he will suffer and die and that we are called to follow him to this eternal life. It seems contradictory that we might be **hopeful** after hearing such a prediction, but it is through this action that Jesus will bring about our salvation.



children's  
story



### *Circles of Hope*

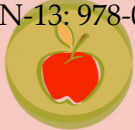
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character  
education  
activity

**We must accept finite  
disappointment, but we must  
never lose infinite hope.  
-Martin Luther King, Jr.**

## *Circles of Hope*

Set in the country of Haiti, we find a young boy by the name of Facile who wishes to plant a tree in honor of his new baby sister, but he faces one obstacle after another. The first seed he plants is eaten by a goat, the second seed is washed away in a storm, and yet another seed is burned during a scrub fire. Facile continues to persevere and **hope** that the seed will grow into a tree. Both the story and the illustrations capture the indomitable spirit of **hope**.

## **Hope is Our Anchor**

Step One: Find a template for an anchor online. Provide the students with materials so that each child can make their own anchor. On the cross beam of the anchor, have the students write their names and then invite the students to spend some time thinking and writing a **hope** that they have for themselves.

Step Two: Invite the students to pair up and to share the **hopes** that they have written down. Then ask each student to share the **hope** that their partner wrote down with the class.

Step Three: If there is a prayer table in the classroom, invite each student to place their anchor on the table for the remainder of the day, and then to carry the anchor of **hope** home so that it will remind them of the importance of having **hope**.

Optional: If the students have an opportunity to place their anchor of **hope** at the foot of the altar at the parish church and to spend a brief period of silence there, it could help the students grow in comfort and familiarity with the church. This also becomes an opportunity to help the students understand the importance of a period of sacred silence.

The virtue of hope grows out of faith and is the manifestation of love, gifts given to us by God to help us in our journey to heaven where alone we can find perfect happiness.  
-CCC 1817



case study

Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.

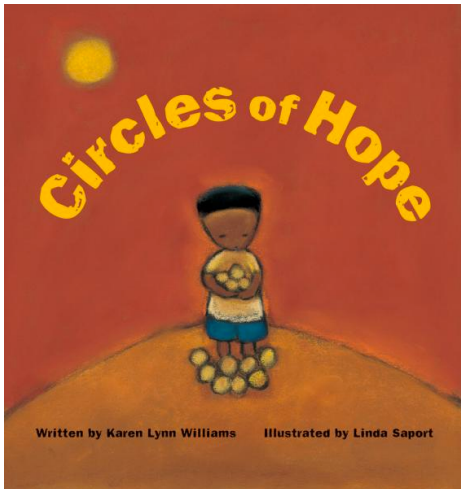
## What could you do today?

When you return home from school, ask your mom or dad if they would like to hear about the story *Circles of Hope*. Tell them about the story from your memory and then share the activity of making an anchor of **hope**. Ask your parents why an anchor might be a good symbol of **hope**, and share your ideas about what an anchor represents. Show your family the anchor that you made and share what **hope** you wrote on it. Ask your family members if they have a **hope** that they want to share with you.

## Look Feel Know Act

With the help of an adult or an older sibling, look at a newspaper for stories of **hope**. A lot of the time, the newspaper is filled with bad news, but it also contains stories of good news. There are a great number of wonderful and **hopeful** things that happen daily throughout the world, and these are the stories we need to focus on if we are to bring **hope** into our lives and into the lives of others.

Think about a time when you brought **hope** to someone or when someone brought **hope** to you. Do you remember how you felt during this time? Once you have thought about this, make a commitment to speak **hopeful** words and to do things that bring **hope** to others. In another one of his letters, Saint Paul tells his readers to *speaking only the words that are helpful to another person, those things that will encourage and bring hope*. Make this a motto for yourself so that the words you use with others will be sources of **hope** and help



**Hope** is a theological virtue and it is intricately connected to faith and love. In the readings selected for this Sunday, words of **hope** are not overshadowed even in the midst of failures and disappointments. Similarly, in the book *Circles of Hope*, we encounter a young boy who wishes to do good yet is faced with obstacles. His **hope** helps him to persevere despite the challenges he encounters in his quest to do something good for his baby sister. **Hope** is most operative when we are faced with overwhelming odds. It is this virtue of **hope** that propels us to move beyond disappointments.



closing  
tool

Lord God, I wish to praise you with every word and action that is part of my daily life. Grant me your strength so that I may see each challenge as an opportunity to trust and hope in you. Lord, be with me in the midst of any troubles that come my way and remind me immediately that you are with me. Allow me to always remember that you are with me at all times and all places and in the midst of all things, and let this be my hope. Amen.



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