



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



ordinary
time



lectionary
reading

Cycle C

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary #123

Reading I: Isaiah 66:18-21

The prophet Isaiah speaks of God's yearning that all people might be one. God indeed wishes to gather "people of every nation and language" so that they might see God's glory and know of God's love.

Reading 2: Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

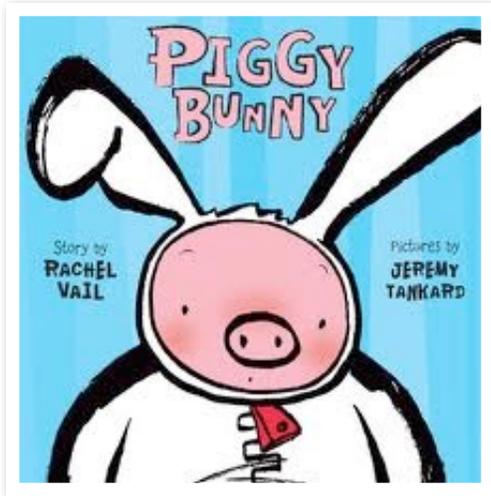
The writer of the letter to the Hebrews speaks to the value of **discipline** in living an ethical life. Often when we are corrected we may feel unloved but the correction comes, hopefully in a loving manner, so that we can correct a behavior, a way of talking or thinking that does not reflect us as the images of God we are intended to be in this life. We are each called to be open to a **discipline** that comes our way and it is crucial that the one who is calling us to **discipline** does it in a loving manner.

Gospel: Luke 13:22-30

In this gospel passage from Saint Luke we clearly hear the message that if we are going to follow Christ, it will require of us a **discipline**. That is the hard work, not trying to do things the easy way but rather to be diligent about doing things in a way that will help us develop day by day in living an ethical life. Living a life of goodness requires us to strive to be and do the best we can each day. Unfortunately there will be days that we will not do as well as we would hope for.



children's
story



Piggy Bunny

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Illustrated by Jeremy Tankard

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character
education
activity

**Discipline and perseverance
The definition of both words
speaks to the test of anyone's
commitment to remaining
loyal and focused to a
particular virtue, mist
especially when faced with
difficulties**

Piggy Bunny

Most piglets want to be pigs when they grow up. Not Liam. He wants to be a bunny and the Easter bunny at that. He will not be discouraged. He is **disciplined** and tries his hardest to learn how to hop and to eat salad, even if no one believes that a piggy can be a bunny. With a lot of determination and **discipline** and a little help from his grandma Liam is determined to make his dream come true.

Think of a time when you wanted to be something or do something and at first it seemed so hard and was a far off dream. There can be great successes if we stick with something long enough and practice at it. To dream of something is one thing, but to actually bring that something about we have to be **disciplined**. This is where parents and teachers and coaches come in. They help us stay with it and correct us so that we can achieve our goal. It is very important to see these people as our cheerleaders even when what they ask of us seems to be difficult and challenging.

Jesus wanted very much to do the will of His Father and so He listened and spent a great deal of time in prayer so that His Father could direct Him in every way. Each of us is called to listen to those who are being our coach in life. That is the job that God has given them, to help us be the best we can be and to help us learn how to be **disciplined**.

Learning a New Skill

Step One: Recall something you learned and the steps you had to take to accomplish the task. Maybe learning to tie your shoe. Who taught you how to tie your shoe? Did your learn to do it in different steps? How many times did it take before your learned to do it?

Maybe, it was learning to play a piece on the piano, throwing a curve ball, or making an art project. Again, who helped you and gave you ideas of how you might accomplish what you wanted?

Step Two: Think of something new that you want to learn or accomplish. What will you need to do to make this "dream" a reality? Who would you ask to help you? Would you be OK with the idea that it may take some time and **discipline** to accomplish it? Will you listen to your parents or teacher or coach as they try to help you?

Discipline and perseverance are things that we will always have to work at. Think of it as always trying to be the best in whatever you do!



case study

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

What could you do today?

You are struggling to learn something new and you become very frustrated and want to walk away but instead of doing that you ask for help. The person you ask for help is showing you how you might accomplish what you are after. When you start going in a direction that is not going to help you get where you want to be, the person makes some suggestions. It will be up to you to see the suggestion as a help and not a criticism.

Can you recall a time when someone corrected you and at first you thought they were being mean but eventually you saw that they were just trying to help you? Have you ever tried to help someone and they thought you were being mean when really you were just trying to help?

Look Feel Know Act

Discipline and perseverance go hand in hand and they are seen as definite signs of the strength of one's character. Each of the Sunday readings speak to being persons of discipline and perseverance in some of the hardest situations.

The prophet Isaiah wants the people to know that God is calling each person to be the very best they can be and that we are all unique and uniqueness when celebrated together brings about wonderful things.

The writer of the Hebrews speaks to the fact that we must be open to being corrected, for that will help us be the best we can be. A person that is disciplined wants always to do and be the best they can be and it often takes the help of others to see things that we do not see alone.

The Gospel of Luke also speaks of not trying to use the easiest way out but to be disciplined enough to do that which will make us better and stronger in mind, body, and spirit.

In *Piggy Bunny*, we see Liam absolutely resolved to being the best possible bunny. He is determined to not just be a bunny, but the Easter bunny. Liam tries his hardest and eventually he seeks the help of his grandma and she encourages him and guides him with some ideas of how to be what he wants to be. It is so very important for us to understand that we need to help one another be the people we are called to be by God, and that parents and teachers and coaches will help us to do just that and sometimes that means correcting us.



closing tool

Pray that you will always seek the help of God in being a person that stays at it, a person who is disciplined to be the very best you can be. By doing this you may accomplish great things and the greatest of these is being the image of God that each of us is intended to be. Be OK with the fact that some days we are better images of God than others!



**Santa Clara
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Character Education at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics
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