



build. plant. grow.
the word this week

Cycle C

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary #129

Reading I: Wisdom 9: 13-18B

The writer of today's first reading from Wisdom speaks to the fact that if we wish to lead a life of **commitment** to God, there are some primary things with which we need to concern ourselves. We cannot have access to God's will or understand God's way apart from God's gift of Wisdom. The Greek word for wisdom is *sophia* and is often seen as the feminine dimension of God. In wishing to **commit** our lives to God, we must also **commit** ourselves to being seekers of God's Wisdom.



ordinary
time



Reading 2: Philemon 9-10, 12-17

Saint Paul in his letter to Philemon, a leader of one of the churches Saint Paul established writes of his ongoing **commitment** in spite of being imprisoned. When an individual is **committed** to something we are called to transcend the difficulty to remain focused and committed.

Gospel: Luke 14: 25-33

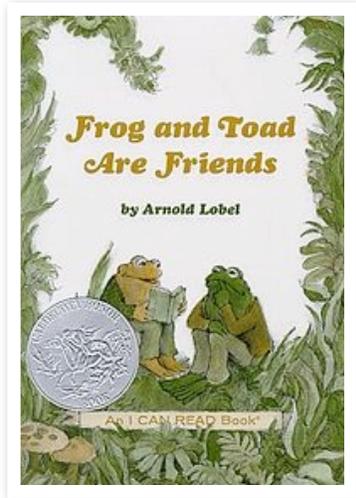
Saint Luke continues this theme of **commitment**, so much so that in this passage Jesus says something that, at face value, is very distressing. "*If anyone wishes to follow me without **hating** his father or mother...*" These are really strong words that are not to be taken literally, that is at face value, but rather to make a bold statement that if one does wish to follow Jesus, there will be sacrifices made in order to lead a life of **commitment** to Jesus.



lectionary
reading



children's story



Frog and Toad Are Friends

Written by Arnold Lobel

Illustrated by Arnold Lobel

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character
education
activity

Commitment is thinking, speaking and acting with love and a dedication to God, others and the environment.

Frog and Toad Are Friends

In *Frog and Toad Are Friends* the reader is able to experience the true friendship and **commitment** that these amphibians have to one another. Their respect and **commitment** to their friendship comes through in every instance. Even though the characters are fictional, the feelings they share and convey to young readers are very real. The care they show for one another and the world around them expands upon the theme of friendship and commitment on a grander level. This story is a primer for illustrating examples of good behavior

This story will give the students an opportunity to see God as their friend as well as the **commitment** that God has to them and to the world that God created. Likewise, it will be an opportunity for the students to recognize the need for making a **commitment** to God by being friends to others and to God's creation by living a life of caring and regard for creation.

All three readings focus on being people **committed** to God and following a particular way of life that requires **commitment**. In the Wisdom reading we hear the need to **commit** oneself to learning and understanding, a prime opportunity to emphasize to the students the need to be "life-long learners." Saint Paul speaks to the fact that no matter the difficulty or the obstacle (prison), when one is **committed**, they move onward with trust.

Jesus, likewise speaks of often having to make sacrifices to remain true to one's commitment, most especially to the commitment to follow Jesus and help to realize the Kingdom of God here on earth.

Who are Your Friends?

Step One: Think about the person you consider your closest friend. Make a list of all the words that describe the person. Now that you have made the list of words, write a paragraph that would describe them.

Step Two: Using the list of words and the paragraph, draw some pictures and write a story of the two of you, much like the Frog and Toad story you heard.

Commitment is like looking at a large mountain and being determined to climb the mountain even with any obstacles that may be in your path.



case study

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

What could you do today?

Think about some adults that you look up to and respect. Make a list of them and then decide on one or two people you would like to interview, much like a newspaper reporter. Ask them what the word **commitment** means to them and then ask them if they could share a story about **commitment**.

List some of your personal qualities that make you think about being committed to following Jesus. How do these qualities make you a good friend and steward of the earth?

Look Feel Know Act

Commitment is striving, that is doing your best, in living as a follower of Jesus. In the Old and New Testaments we see many different people striving to remain faithful, that is committed to God. Jesus, especially, becomes the model of **commitment** in the New Testament as He always seeks to do the will of God the Father.

We are called to respond to the invitation to be “life-long learners.” This invitation comes from many places but today we hear it in the first reading from the Book of Wisdom. Likewise, we are challenged by Saint Paul’s commitment to the mission of spreading the Gospel even though he is held down physically by being chained in prison. Jesus, in today’s gospel, reminds us that to follow him means that there will be sacrifices to be made.

Once we know this, it is important to take these ideas and write out a personal mission statement or covenant with God so that you could review it in order to remain **committed** to living life as a follower of Jesus. Writing it down so that we can look at it on occasion will help us to remain focused on the **commitment** we have made. We all need reminders.



closing tool

In *Frog and Toad Are Friends* we see Frog looking forward to a whole year of happy times with his friend Toad. If only Toad would agree to wake up from his long winter nap! Clever Frog finds a way to rouse his sleepy friend. There are examples of **commitment** throughout the story. When Frog doesn't feel well, Toad tries to tell him a story. When Toad loses a button, Frog helps him look for it. When Toad goes swimming in his funny bathing suit, Frog tries not to laugh and when Toad is sad because he doesn't get any mail, Frog knows just what to do.

Pray that God will help you to be the best friend you can be to others and to the environment. By being good to others and the earth you actually are being best friends with God.



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