

Cycle B

Thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary # 149

Reading I: Jeremiah 31:7-9

This passage from the prophet Jeremiah speaks about the restoration of God's people in a future of renewed life. It is a message of **hope** in the midst of the final dissolution of the kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah proclaims that beyond destruction and exile lies a recreated people. As other prophets have also said, in God's future age of salvation, peace and **hope** will reign.

Reading 2: Hebrews 5:1-6

The writer of the Book of Hebrews speaks of Jesus as the perfect mediator between humanity and God. Jesus, having known human trial and weakness through his own experiences, wishes to bring **hope** to all. Called by the Father to do so, Jesus brings all of humanity with him to the Father for healing and restoration. Christ continues to encourage us as the mediator between us and God, and in doing so, fills all people with **hope**.

Gospel: Mark 10:46-52

When listening to Saint Mark's Gospel, it is important to remember that it is written for a community that is undergoing great confusion, loss, and persecution. Because of this, Jesus is emphasized as the Messiah, the ultimate **hope**, who will bring God's final rule to the people. This healing account, like so many other miracles in the Gospels, serves to demonstrate and emphasize that the Kingdom of God has truly begun in Jesus. It is through him that God overcomes the evil of every illness and all suffering. Jesus is God's revelation of a **hope** for a people who are in great turmoil. This Jesus is also our **hope** when we are struggling with our own trials.



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



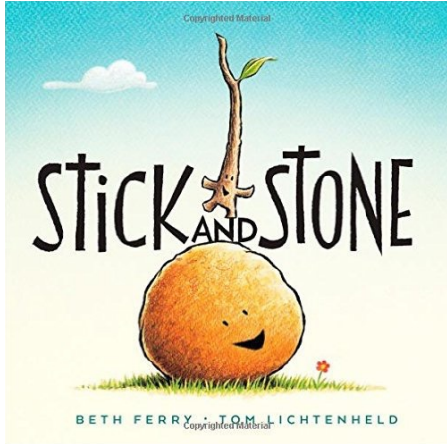
ordinary
time



lectionary
reading



children's
story



Stick and Stone

Written by Beth Ferry

Illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld

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character
education
activity

Our human compassion binds us one to the other—not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.

-Nelson Mandela

Stick and Stone

Stick and Stone is a simply written story that talks about bullying and that shows how a true friend is called to be a source of **hope** in the midst of distress. Given the current challenges that bullying pose to children, this book offers a way to think about and deal with bullying. When Stick rescues Stone from a prickly situation with Pinecone, the pair become fast friends. As the story progresses, themes of friendship, kindness, and **hope** are seen through friends that are able to support each other.

Hanging Onto Hope, Saying Good-Bye to Bullying

Step One: Write the following two statements on the board:

Sticks and stones can break my bones, but names will never hurt me!

Sticks and stones can break my bones, but names can really hurt me!

Invite the students to read and think about each of the statements. Ask them which one of the two is truer.

Step Two: Ask the students to think about what it was like when someone called them a name or said something unkind to them, or about them.

Step Three: As the teacher, you might wish to share with the students a story that illustrates the hurt that you may have experienced because of someone's unkindness.

Step Four: Give each student a light gray paper "stone" on which they can write a behavior that could hurt someone or make them feel bad. They could also draw on the stone instead of write.

Step Five: Have the students crumple up the gray stone and then try to smooth it out again. Explain to the students that once something hurtful has been said, it is hard for it to be forgotten.

Step Six: Have each of the students speak about the hurt that they put on their stone and ask the class to think about how they can bring **hope** for the person who has been hurt. Create a class list of ideas of how to prevent bullying and bring **hope** to all students.

Let your hopes shape
your future and not
your hurts!
-Archbishop Desmond Tutu



case study

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

What could you do today?

Saint Paul writes to a community of people living in a town called Ephesus and gives them great advice: *Do not let unkind things come out of your mouth. Say only the things that are helpful to people.* By living out these words, not only can you avoid bullying, but you can also bring **hope** to people who you encounter. Take this passage and make it a prayer that you can practice throughout the day in order to remind yourself how important it is to say things that lift people up and bring **hope**.

Look Feel Know Act

Oftentimes, reports in the newspapers, on television, and on the radio are very sad and can overshadow the many good and wonderful things that are happening in the world today. While we can't ignore the sad things that are going on in the world, if we only focus on these things we can become overwhelmed with sadness. There are many wonderfully kind and good things being done by people, and these are things that can bring us **hope**.

Think of ways that you can bring **hope** to people in simple ways. Smiling and saying hello to someone can often act as a ray of sunshine. Recall how nice it was when someone said hello or smiled at you, especially if you had been having a difficult day. Commit yourself to being a bearer of **hope** as often as you can.

Christianity is built upon the virtues of faith, **hope**, and love. The readings for this Sunday all exemplify the importance of **hope**, especially the **hope** that we find in our relationship with Jesus. In the story *Stick and Stone*, we see the importance of another person bringing **hope** in the midst of a difficult situation. Each person will have moments of weakness, and when this occurs, it is important to turn to those around us to be beacons of **hope**. Likewise, there will be times when we will need to bring **hope** to others.



**closing
tool**

Loving God, I trust in You and I pray that your Spirit will bring to light the virtue of hope that you have placed within me. May the hope that I bear be a source of strength for myself and for others who turn to me when they are in need. Amen.



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