

Cycle C

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Lectionary #54

Reading I: Acts 14: 21-27

Saint Paul is a perfect example of someone who lives out the virtue of **perseverance**. In today's reading, we see that he and Barnabas return to Lystra, where he had almost been put to death. However, this does not deter him from returning to the city to check on the fledgling church. Growth, whether physical, mental, or spiritual, takes time and requires **perseverance**. Saint Paul says that *it is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God*. **Perseverance**, then, is necessary for individuals to be truly faithful.

Reading 2: Revelations 21: 1-5a

In this reading, we again encounter apocalyptic writing. This literature was composed to encourage people to **persevere** in the midst of great trials and persecution. Saint John writes about the great everlasting, when there will be *no more tears, no more death, mourning, wailing or pain*. He says that for those who **persevere**, nothing can triumph except for God's goodness. **Perseverance** is the route that will bring us to everlasting life with God.

Gospel: John 13: 31-33a, 34-35

Jesus knows that shame and death will not have the last word and that they will not thwart the divine purpose for which he came. Jesus proclaims with great confidence that in his death, there will be a glory. He speaks these words so that the disciples will not lose heart when his suffering and death come about but will **persevere** in their faith and carry that faith to others. In Jesus' new commandment to the disciples, he describes the need for the disciples to **persevere** in love.

build. plant. grow.
the word this week



easter



lectionary
reading



children's
story



The Most Magnificent Thing

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character
education
activity

**You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, and how you can still come out of it.
-Maya Angelou**

The Most Magnificent Thing

In this story, the main character, an unnamed girl, and her very special friend, a dog, have a wonderful dream of making the “most magnificent thing.” She tries over and over again to create this special thing, but after many failures, she becomes angry and gives up. However, her friend the dog encourages her to take a walk and cool down and then to return to her project with renewed confidence and enthusiasm. This story can help students realize that failing is ok, and that it is ok to feel sad over a failure, but not to stay in sadness for too long. Rather, this story reveals the importance of **perseverance**.

Investigative Reporter Activity

Step One: Pair the students up so that they can interview each other about a time when they had to **persevere** in order to become successful at something. Make sure that the students understand that **perseverance** involves sticking to it when their task involves learning and mastering something new.

Step Two: Each student in the pair will take turns interviewing the other, taking notes on the story of the challenge that required **perseverance**.

Step Three: When they have finished interviewing, have the partners help each other edit their story.

Step Four: If there is time, allow the students to present the story of **perseverance** that they learned from their partner.

Let us not become
weary in doing good,
for at the proper time
we will reap a harvest if
we do not give up.
-Galatians 6:9



case study

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

What could you do today?

Think about something that you would like to achieve. It could be learning to do something new, or it could be breaking a habit. Once you have decided on what you would like to achieve, ask your parents or another adult about whether you have chosen an achievable goal. Next, you need to determine the steps you will have to take over time to achieve your goal. Remember how important **perseverance** will be to achieving your goal. Recall also that many successful people have failed when they have tried to reach their goal, but that **perseverance** was necessary for them to eventually reach success. **Perseverance** is part of the process of trying, failing, reworking, redoing, and recognizing what does and does not work. Look at the whole process of trying to reach your goal as an adventure and don't be afraid to try different things to find out what does and does not work for you.

Look Feel Know Act

Read about people like Abraham Lincoln, Walt Disney, Michael Jordan, and other individuals who were initially judged as not having talent and were told that they would not be able to reach their goals. See how the opinions of others did not deter them, and pay attention to the **perseverance** that each individual displayed as they worked to achieve their goals.

These individuals are role models for us and they show that the only way to truly fail is to stop trying. Make a commitment to yourself to **persevere** and involve God as your coach on each and every adventure.



In every one of the passages for this Sunday, we encounter **perseverance** in one form or another, whether it is in the early church visited by Saint Paul, the words of Saint John as he encourages those being persecuted, or the acts of Jesus as he remains faithful to the will of the Father. The little unnamed girl can be each and every one of us as we are called to stay at it, take a break when we become frustrated, and then return to our task with renewed trust in ourselves because we know that we only fail when we give up.



closing
tool

Loving Father, help me to always know that you are with me as I face the challenges and opportunities placed before me. Help me understand that I am never alone in the midst of trials, but that you provide me with the strength and endurance that I need in each moment of my life.



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