



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



ordinary  
time



lectionary  
reading

## Cycle C

### Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary #150

#### Reading I: Sirach 35: 12-14, 16-18

Sirach is classified as wisdom literature. As such it seeks to enable the reader to understand correct ways of living. In this particular section, the writer is encouraging the reader to be committed to living a life rooted in **justice**: *Justice is seeking, being committed to, and willing to work for others for what God intends for them.* The writer speaks also to the fact that God sees and is aware when injustice is done and that those involved in injustice will have to answer for their actions. The writer also encourages the one who is treated unjustly to speak their needs in prayer, knowing that their prayers will indeed “pierce the clouds.”

#### Reading 2: 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18

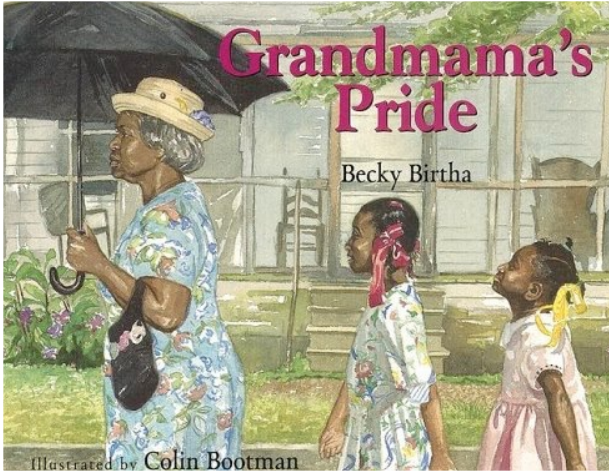
Saint Paul speaks to the **justice** that will be done for him as one who has remained faithful. He addresses Timothy and the church Timothy leads in a second letter speaking in the form of an athletic metaphor. He says *I merit the crown for I have run the race and I have fought the fight.* He encourages all to remain faithful for the just rewards will come their way as well.

#### Gospel: Luke 18: 9-14

In this gospel selection from Saint Luke we see Jesus illustrate the differing approaches of two individuals in prayer. Both approach the temple area to pray and one, a Pharisee, boldly moves forward and seemingly prays to himself, lauding his many virtues and putting down others while doing so. The other, a tax collector, who would be seen as on the lowest rung of the social ladder, approaches the temple area in a very contrite manner with his head bowed and striking his breast as a sign of true contrition. The one who boasts his goodness but does not recognize his errors is not a person of **justice**, whereas the one who seeks forgiveness walks away **justified**.



children's  
story



### *Grandmama's Pride*

Written by Becky Birtha

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character  
education  
activity

**Justice is wanting and  
working for others to have the  
same things that we want for  
ourselves.**

## *Grandmama's Pride*

This story follows the experiences of two sisters who visit their grandmother in the South at a time in America's history where segregation was still a prominent aspect of life. Throughout their time in the South, the sisters experience their Grandmother's acceptance of segregation while using public transportation, using certain water fountains and conforming to the norms around the town. After returning to their home in the North, the girls become more educated on social issues regarding segregation and the changes towards civil rights. When the girls return to their Grandmother's house, they use their newfound knowledge of the world around them to question the actions of those in their Grandmother's neighborhood. With this, the girls take the steps of sitting in the front of the bus, exercising the realization of their rights.

Think of a time when you felt very alone and isolated from others. It might have been when you were out on the playground and not included in a game or an event. What did it feel like? Often times we tend to see the differences of others rather than what we share in common. If it is true that we are each made in the image and likeness of God, then we need to see that God is reflected in all the variety that surrounds us.

The writer of Sirach speaks to the importance of seeking **justice**, especially for those who do not have the things that are intended by God for all of humanity. The plight of the poor, the oppressed, and those who live on the fringe of society because of the greed or indifference of others is sadness God wishes not to see. God, after all, created the world out of love for everyone intending that all of the gifts of the world be shared.

## *Promoting Justice*

Step One: After reading *Grandmama's Pride*, students may be prompted to pretend they are the children visiting their grandmother in the South.

Step Two: Using art materials, students will create a flyer or a newsletter that would be handed out to the members of grandmama's community. These flyers would highlight civil rights that come from being made in the image and likeness of God.

**Justice is intended by God for all made in God's image and likeness. Being committed to justice makes us a clearer image and likeness of God.**



**case study**

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

## **What could you do today?**

The parish you belong to has a very active Just-Faith program that sponsors a great many speaker and activities, however all of the focus seems to involve only adults. You know from among your classmates that there is a great desire to be part of the **justice** issues and activities of the parish. Would you be willing to meet with the pastor or those in charge of the Just Faith Program to seek to establish a Students for **Justice** Program in the parish and the school?

## **Look Feel Know Act**

When you explore the basis for **justice** you can see that it really is part of the unique Christian love that is referred to in the Greek language as AGAPE. Agape is "wanting for others what I want for myself," so then, **justice** is really another word for love. In the Scriptures we hear time and again that the most important law is the law of love, loving God, and loving our neighbor. The love of God and the love of neighbor is intimately connected. If I am going to be loving of God, I must express that love in my actions on the behalf of others. The prophets and Jesus will reiterate time and again that true worship of God is made manifest in how we interact with one another in a loving manner.

Knowing that this is true and feeling that deeply within our hearts and souls, we are then called to act when we see an injustice. Often times the injustice may be far more than we are able to take on. However, prayer is a very mighty power to combat injustice. Dedicating part of our prayer life to **justice** for others is one way that we may act on the part of **justice**.

In connection with the virtue of **justice** is making certain that indifference towards others does not enter into our lives. There are sins of commission, that is doing things that are wrongful. However, there are also the sins of omission, not doing the loving thing that we are able to do but choosing not to do them. Indifference can be a very sad reality and is probably one of the greatest sins of omission.



## closing tool

In *Grandmama's Pride* we see two sisters who come to an understanding that there are some inequities in the world and the inequities remain if no one speaks of them and remains indifferent. The process of transformation, that is changing attitudes and practices, is a long process and it takes patience and love to help others along. Change is gradual and comes about in time with nurturing and love. Think of it as a rose bud that is tightly closed. Given time the bud will open into a beautiful flower. If one tries to pry the petals open physically, one risks destroying the flower itself.

**Pray that you will you will remain committed to loving people in such a way that you will help them along in understanding things with patience and kindness.**



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