



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



ordinary  
time



lectionary  
reading

## Cycle B

### Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary #116

#### Reading I: 1 Kings 19: 4-8

In this reading from the book of Kings, we meet the prophet Elijah, who is exhausted after struggling with King Ahab, his wife Jezebel, and the prophets of Baal. Elijah now finds himself on the run and, weary of his struggle, he rests underneath a broom tree. He is awakened by an angel of God who encourages the prophet to gain **strength** from the food and water laid before him. After enjoying this nourishment, Elijah tries to rest and sleep again, but the angel commands him to have more divine food and drink in order to be **strengthened** for a journey that will last forty days and nights and that will lead him to God's holy mountain.

#### Reading 2: Ephesians 4:30-5:2

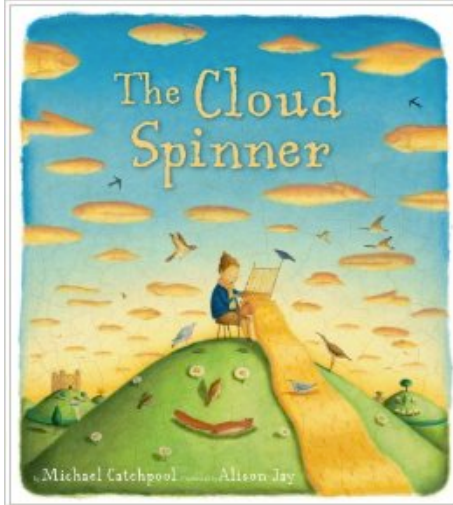
Saint Paul advises the members of the Church of Ephesus to live according to the orders of the Lord and to be **strengthened** by not only avoiding negative behaviors but also by focusing on being kind, loving, compassionate, and forgiving people. By living out these virtues, they will find a **strength** that is not attainable any other way. Saint Paul invites them and us to be *imitators of God, as beloved children, and to live in love*. This imitation strengthens us and allows us to be God's *fragrant aroma* within the world.

#### Gospel: John 6: 41-55

Today's Gospel is the third portion of the Bread of Life discourse. Jesus proclaims that he is *The Bread of Life*: nourishment that will provide **strength** for the journey of life. Jesus makes it clear that he is the Word made flesh and sent into the world by the Father. This **strengthening** nourishment is intended for everyone because God sent Jesus into the world for the good of ALL people. In this reading, Saint John looks towards Jesus' death, when he will give his entire being for the life of the world. Here, food and drink are essential for every human being, as they serve to maintain each individual's **strength** in body, mind, and spirit.



children's  
story



### *The Cloud Spinner*

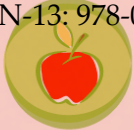
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character  
education  
activity

**I can do all things through  
Christ who strengthens me!  
Philippians 4:13**

## The Cloud Spinner

In the story of *The Cloud Spinner*, we meet a young boy who has the unique ability to create cloth from the clouds. One day, a very greedy king sees a magnificent scarf that the young boy is wearing. The king demands that the boy weave and weave and weave so that he can have unique and beautiful clothing made from the clouds. Eventually, there are no clouds left in the sky to provide water, which threatens the wellbeing of all life on earth. The young boy shows great courage and **strength** by prophetically calling the king to understand that the earth is fragile and that his greed is causing great harm. The young boy is the voice of reason and calls upon wisdom, courage, and **strength** to protect the fragile earth. This story aligns with Pope Francis's encyclical on the Protection of the Earth and shows how important it is for individuals to take responsibility for caring for the earth.

## An Assortment of Strengths

Step One: Provide the students with a worksheet with names of the following **strengths** in a column on the left side of the paper and a column on the right side that can be used to describe those strengths.

Step Two: Ask the students how they would describe those strengths listed on the left side of their paper.

For Example:

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Description</u>
Appreciation	noticing and being thankful for the beauty or skills of someone else

- Bravery
- Caution
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Enthusiasm
- Fairness
- Forgiveness
- Gratitude
- Honesty
- Optimism
- Humor
- Leadership
- Love
- Kindness

Some of us think  
holding on makes us  
strong, but sometimes  
it is letting go  
Hermann Hesse



case study

Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.

## What could you do today?

Using the list that you generated and described with your fellow students, pick out two of the **strengths** on the list. One of the **strengths** should be a **strength** that you see in yourself, and the other one should be a **strength** that you would like to continue to develop. Once you have identified these, share with one or both of your parents the **strength** that you possess and ask their advice on how you can develop the **strength** you wish to work on. By talking with your parents, you might gain new insight into the **strengths** that you possess and learn how to become stronger in other aspects of your life!

## Look Feel Know Act

When we look historically at people of great **strength** of character and leadership, they are generally people who have faith in God and who allow God to guide them. People of great moral **strength** and character have often undergone many hardships, but were not deterred from striving to reach their goals. Their perseverance can be a result of their trust that God called them to their journey and is with them at all times. Commit yourself to being the person God is calling you to be and be confident in the fact that even if there are challenges, God is right there with you, guiding you every step of the way. It is always important to invite God into every move you make and then trust in the **strength** that God constantly gives to you.

*The Cloud Spinner* presents a wonderful opportunity for young people to see that they can possess a wisdom beyond their years if they listen to God, who speaks to them in their heart. They will learn that it is always a good idea to follow what they know to be good and true even when other might disagree. The readings for this weekend provide three very important lessons about what it means to be a person of **strength** and most especially how true **strength** comes from trust in God.



**closing  
tool**

**Make the passage from Saint Paul's letter to the Philippians your mantra prayer. A mantra prayer is a short prayer that you say over and over several times throughout the day. In this case, it is the verse Philippians 4:13:**

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!*



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