



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



ordinary
time



lectionary
reading

Cycle B

Twentieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #119

Reading I: Proverbs 9:1-6

In today's reading from the book of **Wisdom**, we see **wisdom**, the knowledge of God, personified as a woman. In several of the Old Testament books, Lady **Wisdom** invites the foolish, or anyone seeking wisdom, to partake in her wealth and uses the images of a banquet where rich food and wine are provided. In today's passage, the invitation is insistent, for accepting it is necessary in order to obtain the richness that can be found if we choose to follow **wisdom**. The writer makes it clear that anyone wishing to join **wisdom's** table must leave foolish and unwise ways behind in order to be truly remade at the Table of **Wisdom**.

Reading 2: Ephesians 5:15-20

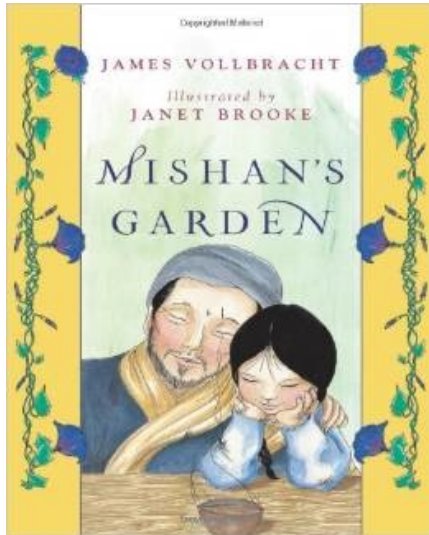
Saint Paul continues to encourage the Church at Ephesus to imitate God. This love involves sacrifice; additionally, it calls those who follow Christ to live as **wise** people who discern and then follow the will of God. This reading emphasizes the same **wisdom** that is described in the first reading. This **wisdom** can be found in those who are able to walk away from behaviors and ways of thinking that are unwise.

Gospel: John 6: 51-58

Today's Gospel continues the very lengthy Bread of Life discourse and includes a segment on **wisdom**. For Saint John, Jesus is the divine Word, or **Wisdom**, of God made flesh. It is in Jesus that one may come to the **wisdom** that is extended to all humanity. Jesus is available to us at the Eucharist not only in word, but also in the sacrament of receiving his Body and Blood. This **wisdom** made flesh becomes our nourishment and is something we receive at the Table of the Lord each and every time we participate in the Eucharist.



children's story



Mishan's Garden

Written by James Vollbracht

Illustrated by Janet Brooke

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character
education
activity

Wisdom is the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting. Ultimately, this wisdom is to desire and do God's will.

Mishan's Garden

Mishan's Garden explores the **wisdom** of a little girl that goes beyond the prevailing beliefs of an entire people and cannot be deterred by what others think of her. In a village high above the clouds, where nobody is happy and nothing grows, a little girl dreams of a garden flourishing behind her father's house. Every day, the cynical villagers watch and mock the little girl. But, nurtured by her kindness and patience, the garden eventually yields the most important fruit: the restored hope and happiness of an entire village. True **wisdom** is revealed and the journey towards that **wisdom** is told by this little girl's perseverance. One of the great pieces of **wisdom** that comes from this story is that perhaps the greatest gift you can ever give another person is to hold them in the highest regard and to see what is best about them. This story is about this **wise** manner of living and loving that proves to be transformative.

Learning Wisdom Sayings

Step One: Break the students up into small groups and provide each group with two sets of index cards that will help them complete a wisdom saying. Have the students work together to match the first part of each saying with the second part of the saying to create one complete phrase. The wisdom sayings below are some that can be used in this activity.

Step Two: After the students have paired up the statements correctly, have them say if they think that the saying came from the Bible or from another source. With each phrase, help the students discuss what they think it means.

- A gentle answer / turns away wrath (Proverbs 15:1)
- Too close / for comfort (common phrase)
- Pride goes / before destruction (Proverbs 16:18)
- Too big / for your britches (common phrase)
- Sticks and stones may break my bones / but words will never hurt me (common phrase)
- Saved by the skin / of your teeth (Job 19:20)
- Do to others / what you would have them do to you (Matthew 7:12)
- Better safe / than sorry (common phrase)
- Innocent / until proven guilty (common phrase)
- Two heads / are better than one (Eccl. 4:9)
- Where your treasure is / so there will be your heart (Matt. 6:21)

**Patience is the
companion of wisdom**
Saint Augustine of Hippo



case study

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

What could you do today?

One of the great gifts of **wisdom** is the ability to learn from one's mistakes. All people make mistakes, and these mistakes are nothing to feel bad about. However, they can be turned into lessons when people learn from those mistakes and choose to act differently in the future. With your parents' assistance, talk about a mistake that you have made in the past and what lesson you were able to take away from that experience. It might be good to write out the situation and recall what you did or said and what consequences occurred. Then, reflect on your choices in words and actions and think about how you could have acted differently. This can become a valuable exercise for making wiser decisions in the future. Thinking before we speak or act is always a good approach to life and the decisions we make.

Look Feel Know Act

Wisdom is gained with age and experience. It can be learned when we are open to how things might occur differently when we think about a situation before saying or doing anything. The Word of God is available to us and will assist us in striving to be good people. Think of God's word as a guideline for how to live **wisely**. Living **wisely** includes being thoughtful about what we say or do. It also allows us to see the damage and destruction that occurs when we are not thoughtful about what is said or done. Make a commitment to think, speak, and act as Jesus would.

In the story of *Mishan's Garden*, we see how **wisdom**, like other virtues, must be cared for in order to grow. The Scripture passages from this Sunday speak to the idea that if virtues are to grow, they must be nurtured so that they can thrive. If a plant does not receive light and water, it will die. In the same way, we must make sure that we nurture our virtues by exercising them in our daily life. We cannot just want or dream about living a virtuous life, we must work towards it each and every day. Hearing the Word of God and allowing it to nourish us is one way to help **wisdom** grow within us. Receiving the Eucharist at Mass is also another sources of nourishment that helps us to grow and thrive in the ways of God.



closing tool

Below is a well known prayer about wisdom that is easily memorized and can be prayed daily:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.



**Santa Clara
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