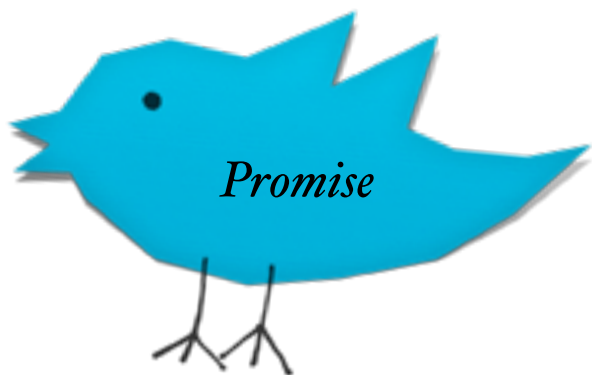




build. plant. grow.  
*the word this week*



lent



lectionary  
reading

## Cycle C

### Second Sunday of Lent

Lectionary #27

#### Reading I: Genesis 15: 5-12, 17-18

In the verses that come before this reading, we see Abram lamenting the fact that he has grown old and has not had a child. God reassures him of the **promise** that, like the stars, Abram's descendants would be beyond counting. God also **promises** Abram a land of his own. Abram and God make an offering to seal the **promises** made between them. Although Abram has no concrete evidence that this **promise** will come true, he places his trust in God. We are called to place the same trust in God's **promise**.

#### Reading 2: Philippians 3: 17 - 4:1

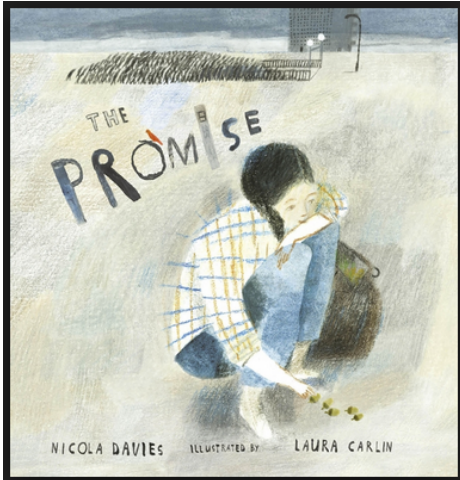
In this passage, Saint Paul encourages the Philippians to free themselves from focusing on the rigors of the Law. We are called to focus on the spirit of the Law, its true meaning, so that we are able to acknowledge and understand God's **promise** to us. Salvation through Christ is the **promise** that is being spoken of, and it is crucial that we understand that it is only through Christ that we have been made this **promise** of salvation. It is through our belief in Christ that we enter into the **promise** of everlasting life.

#### Gospel: Luke 9: 28b-36

In today's reading, we enter the Transfiguration of the Lord. In this event, the man that the disciples have seen as a friend and rabbi is revealed to them as the Son of God, the Messiah. The three disciples whom Jesus takes with him to the mountaintop, Peter, James, and John, see in him the fulfillment of the **promise** that a Messiah will come to Israel. In the vision, the disciples see Jesus stand between Moses, the greatest of the lawgivers, and Elijah, the greatest of the prophets. The alignment of these individuals with Jesus in the center indicates clearly that Jesus is the fulfillment of both the law and the prophets. Jesus is truly the **promise** of God!



## children's story



### *The Promise*

Written by Nicola Davies

Illustrated by Laura Carlin

Publication: 2013 Walker Books Ltd.

ISBN-10: 1406337285

ISBN-13: 1406337280



character  
education  
activity

**Our Lord has written the  
promise of resurrection, not in  
books alone, but in every leaf  
in springtime.  
-Martin Luther**

## *The Promise*

*The Promise* is a beautiful and transformative story about a young thief. As she tries to snatch an older woman's handbag, the old woman holds onto the bag and states emphatically to the girl that she can only have the bag if she gives something in return. This something is a **promise** to plant whatever is in the bag. This begins a transformation within the young thieving girl. She begins to plant the acorns that were in the handbag and watches as the ugly streets transform with beautiful colors. The colors in the illustrations change from drab grays and browns to vibrant colors to accentuate the change that comes when people keep their **promises**.

## *A Promise Board*

Step One: Provide the students with several pieces of colorful construction paper in different shapes and sizes.

Step Two: Invite the children to write a **promise** to God on each piece of paper.

Step Three: Arrange the **promises** on a bulletin board and read each aloud as you add it to the board.

Step Four: As the class meets in the coming weeks, encourage the students to place their initials on a **promise** that they have fulfilled. Additionally, you could incorporate these **promises** into the class prayer each day or at the beginning or end of each week.

**Promise-noun-a declaration or assurance that one will do a particular thing or that a particular thing will happen.**



**case study**

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

## What could you do today?

Spend some time with your parents and develop a **promise** report card that you can put up on the refrigerator. Every morning, take a moment to look at the **promise** report card and keep track of **promises** that you have fulfilled. Some **promises** that you might want to include could be:

- I **promise** to say morning prayers and to ask God to guide my day
- I **promise** to thank God before each meal
- I **promise** to make my bed every morning
- I **promise** to pick up my toys and clothing and to put them away neatly
- I **promise** to...
- I **promise** to...

Design the chart like a weekly calendar with the days of the week across the top and the **promise** statements in a column to the left. Ask your parents to give you a star or sticker on the chart on each day that you have fulfilled that **promise**. Keep track of how you have done over the course of a few weeks and think about where you might want to put more energy into working towards fulfilling your **promises**. Be sure that you celebrate the **promises** that you have been consistent in reaching.

## Look Feel Know Act

When you are traveling in the car, notice the various places along the road and see if there are specific places where you see litter. How do those things look out of place and take away from the natural environment along the road? How does it make you feel to see litter? Think about how God has given us all the beautiful things of the earth in nature and creation, and then think about how litter detracts from that beauty. Make a **promise** with God and with the earth that you will not litter and that when you are able to, that you will pick up litter and throw it away in the proper place.

God is always faithful to the **promises** made to us. However, we are not always faithful in keeping the **promises** that we make to God. In the readings, we hear of the great **promises** made to us and how God has enriched our lives by remaining faithful to these **promises**. In the story of *The Promise*, we can see the beauty that is brought into the world by the girl who strives to keep her **promise**. We can change the world by being **promise** keepers and by recognizing that it takes real effort to keep **promises**. To do this successfully, we must ask God for help and turn to one another to remain faithful to our **promises**.



closing  
tool

Loving God, source of every good thing and keeper of every promise, help me to imitate you so that I may keep my promises to love you and my neighbor. May I see you in them and keep the promise to love them. Amen.



**Santa Clara  
University**

Character Education at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

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