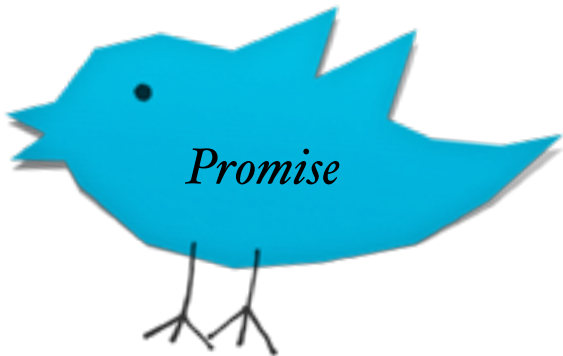




build. plant. grow.
the word this week



pentecost



lectionary
reading

Cycle C

The Feast of Pentecost

Lectionary #63

Reading I: Acts of the Apostles 2: 1-11

This initial passage from the book of the Acts of the Apostles celebrates the fulfillment of Christ's **promise** to send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, upon the Apostles. This **promise** comes upon them in a rushing and violent wind that shakes the house and makes those gathered tremble. The Spirit drives them into the street, where they are able to speak to everyone in their own tongue. The Spirit speaking through them allows God's word to enter the hearts of each person they encounter. This same Spirit is given to each of us and is the fulfillment of God's **promise** to be with us at all times.

Reading 2: I Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Romans 8: 8-17

This very brief reading from 1 Corinthians reinforces the message of the First Reading. The **promise** of the spirit celebrates the fact that, despite our differences, we are one in God's Holy Spirit. Here, as in other selections from the Sacred Scriptures, opposites are seen as equally valid, true, and good.

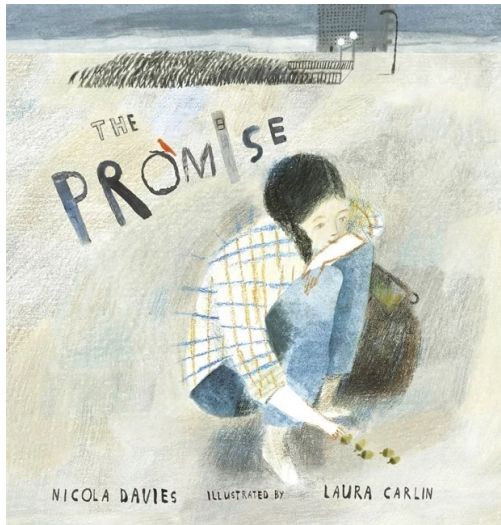
In this reading from Romans, Saint Paul talks about how the Holy Spirit can help uphold God's **promise** to humanity that we may *cast off our old self and embrace a new self*. The good news is that the Spirit initiates and introduces us to a radically new life and relationship with God that is not bound by flesh.

Gospel: John 14: 15-16, or John 20: 19-23

Both of these Gospel passages from Saint John are filled with **promise**. The John 14 passage takes place within the farewell discourse of the Last Supper, when Jesus makes known his love for the disciples and his promise to send an Advocate to be with them always. The John 20 passage continues with the theme of **promise**, for as Jesus breathes upon them, he gifts them with the Holy Spirit, his presence that will remain with them even after he returns to the Father.



children's story



The Promise

Written by Nicola Davies

Illustrated by Laura Carlin

Publication: 2013, Walker Books

ISBN: 9781406337280



character
education
activity

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave or forsake you.

-Deuteronomy 31:6

The Promise

The illustrations of this book and the words of the story reflect the harshness of life without hope or **promise**. In a comfortless world, a young girl must steal in order to survive. One day, she tries to snatch the bag of an old lady, who allows her to take the bag if she **promises** to plant the bag's contents. The girl **promises**, and finds that the bag is filled with acorns. She plants the acorns wherever she can, and this act brings beauty to many places. Ever so slowly, her city changes. Trees grow and people look at them and their lives with a renewed sense of wonder.

Bringing the Promise of Beauty

Step One: Provide the students with a piece of drawing paper that has a line down the middle that divides the sheet in half from top to bottom.

Step Two: On the left side of the paper, invite the students to draw a bland, colorless space, such as those illustrated in the book *The Promise*. Then, on the right side of the page, have students draw that same space with color and vibrancy.

Step Three: Involve the students in a discussion about how God's **promise** brings life and beauty to the world. Ask the students how they might add some beauty to God's world. Are there bleak places at school or in the community that could use brightening?

Step Four: Have the students talk to their parents about if they might be willing to engage in a project together with other students and families. This project would involve bringing hope to others by working at a community garden or bringing fresh food to food banks or donation centers.

The stars may fall, but
God's promises will
stand and be fulfilled.
-J.I. Packer



case study

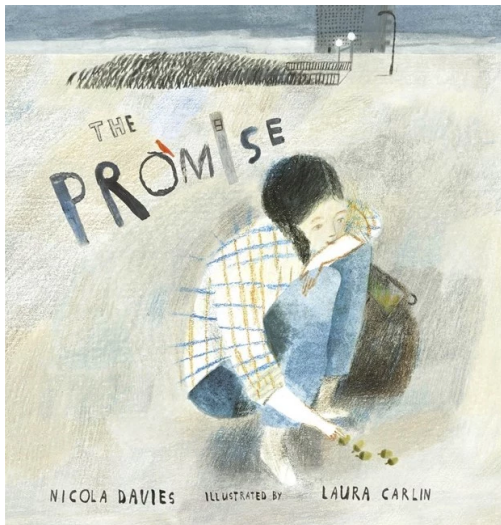
Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

What could you do today?

Realizing how important the **promise** that God made to us is, think about how important it is when people make and keep **promises** to us. Consider the importance of keeping your **promises** to others. It is crucial to understand that we are only responsible for keeping **promises** that are healthy and good for the person who asks us to keep a **promise**. We should not be involved in keeping **promises** that are hurtful or dishonest. It is always important to hear and understand what is being asked of us before we commit to keeping a **promise** of any kind.

Look Feel Know Act

How do you feel when someone breaks a **promise** that they made to you? We can see that when we disobey God, it is very much like breaking a **promise**. When God gave us the Ten Commandments, they were given to us as a covenant, which is a very sacred, special, and unique type of **promise**. There are times when, through our human weakness, we fail in being true to our **promises** to God. Meanwhile, God is always true to his **promise** to love us forever. Certainly, there are times when God does not approve of some of the things that we say or do, but God never goes against his **promise** of loving us despite our shortcomings. When we understand this **promise** that God has made with us, we are able to be more focused on being true and faithful to our **promise** to be the person that God created us to be.



The Scripture passages for this weekend speak of the great **promise** that God has given us, and ultimately this **promise** is to be with us at all times and places and in all circumstances. This is indeed a **promise** that only God can remain faithful to. The unnamed girl in the story *The Promise* is relentless in being faithful to her **promise** to plant seeds and bring beauty to the world. The parallel might be God's relentlessness in being true to the **promise** of loving us.



**closing
tool**

Lord God, help me to always be a person of promises. May I live my life in fidelity to you and in doing so, express that faithfulness by being a person of promise and sincerity. I pray that through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, that I may strive to be this each and every moment of my life. Amen.



**Santa Clara
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