



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



ordinary
time



lectionary
reading

Cycle B

Twenty-Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #143

Reading I: Wisdom 7: 7-11

This reading looks back on Solomon's prayer for **wisdom** from the Book of Kings 3:6-9. In this passage, **wisdom** is seen as more important than wealth, power, health, and beauty. This is made clear by the fact that the speaker chooses **wisdom** over light, which facilitates the physical act of seeing. The speaker in this passage would choose **wisdom** over sight, knowing that with **wisdom**, one can assign everything else its true and lasting value, and thus have true sight.

Reading 2: Hebrews 4:12-13

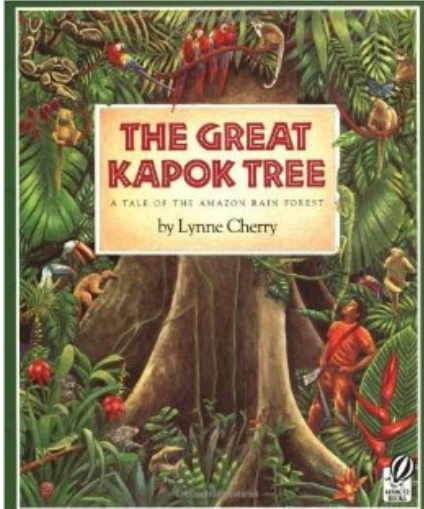
This very brief passage from the Letter to the Hebrews encourages everyone to seek true **wisdom**. It calls us to appreciate the word of God and challenges us to ask ourselves whether we truly seek **wisdom** beyond all other values. This passage stresses that the Word is as alive, discerning, and all-seeing as its origin, God. Although this reading is short, it raises these lofty questions: Do we believe in the power of God's word? Do we consciously seek and encounter the living God in the Scriptures? Do we allow the word to guide our daily activities and attitudes? Do we seek **wisdom** beyond all other values?

Gospel: Mark 10:17-30

Here again, the Gospel speaks of how elusive **wisdom** can be when the choice is between **wisdom** and worldly goods. In this passage, Jesus looks compassionately upon a rich young man who is struggling to follow the Law. He proclaims that he has lived so far without transgressing any Laws. However, Jesus looks lovingly into the heart of the young man and gives him a further challenge: to truly fulfill the Commandments by giving himself to others. This invitation, which saddened the wealthy young man, is also extended to the disciples and to all of us. We are asked to consider whether we will walk away saddened because the fulfillment of the Law of Love requires so much, or if we are able to rise to the challenge with grace and **wisdom**.



children's
story



The Great Kapok Tree

Written by Lynne Cherry

Illustrated by Lynne Cherry

Publication: 2000; HMH Books for Young Readers

ISBN-10: 0152026142

ISBN-13: 978-0152026141



character
education
activity

**We are made wise not by the
recollection of our past, but
by the responsibility for our
future.**

-George Bernard Shaw

The Great Kapok Tree

The Great Kapok Tree takes the reader on a journey into the Amazon Rain Forest, where they meet a young man exhausted from his attempt to cut down a giant kapok tree. While he sleeps, the forest's residents speak to him about the great **wisdom** of preserving their natural habitat. The voices whisper into his ear of the great importance of trees and how *all living things depend on one another*...Once the young man wakes up, he understands the **wisdom** of preserving the tree, and gives up his goal of cutting destroying any part of nature.

The Interconnected World

Step One: Instruct the students to listen and make a list of the various characters in the story of the *The Great Kapok Tree*. After the story is over, ask the students what creatures they have on their lists, and make a cumulative list together as a class.

Step Two: On one of the walls of the classroom, place a large illustration of a kapok tree cut out of construction paper. Invite the students to work in groups to create artistic representations of the different creatures in the story, which will then be placed on the kapok tree.

Step Three: Using colorful yarn, have the students connect the creatures with the tree and with the other creatures so that they are able to see how everything is interconnected. Explain to the students that because humans are made in the image and likeness of God, we are called to care for all creatures so that they can thrive. Discuss the **wisdom** of living responsible and respectful lives so that there is a future for all of creation.

**Talent is God given. Be
humble!
Fame is man-given. Be
grateful!
Conceit is self-given. Be
careful!
-John Wooden**



case study

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

What could you do today?

It is often said that **wisdom** comes with age and experience. With the help of your parents, make a list of people who are older than you who would be willing to be interviewed about the most important lessons they have learned throughout their lives. Take some time to hear their stories—what lessons have they learned? What mistakes have they learned from? Keep these stories in your mind and know that making mistakes is a part of life and that learning from them is the essence of **wisdom**.

Look Feel Know Act

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible the first story we hear is the creation story. After each element of the world is created, there is an exclamation that *God saw that it was good*. Humans are the final creatures that are made, and with their creation, *God saw that it was very good*. The goodness of human beings is to be as much like God as possible and to look after all of creation as God would. When we understand and know that we are called to care for our Earth, we are also experiencing the gift of **wisdom**.

Make a daily commitment to look at the world around you and see, feel, and believe that you are called to watch over creation as God would. Think of it in this way: if you created something that you loved a great deal, how would you want it used by others?

The story of *The Great Kapok Tree* is a great opportunity to talk about **wisdom** as a virtue that can be lived out. While all virtues call for action, the virtue of **wisdom** is powerful in that it shows us how we can live our lives in a way that is ethical, responsible, and good for all people and creatures.



**closing
tool**

Loving God, be with me each and every day so that I may know how to lovingly interact with all of your beautiful creation. Help me to always see these wonders that your hands have made as beautiful and not solely for my own use. Amen.



**Santa Clara
University**

Character Education at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics
ethics programs for communities that learn, live, pray, or work together

www.scu.edu/character