

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



F A M I L I E S R E C L A I M I N G S U N D A Y

Read aloud: 2 Chronicles 36:14-17, 19-23

Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel: John 3:14-21

Late one evening, Therese Pauline was sitting on the couch in the family room working on a counted cross-stitch picture. It seems she never had the time to work on her projects any more, unless she stayed up late, after all the children were in bed.

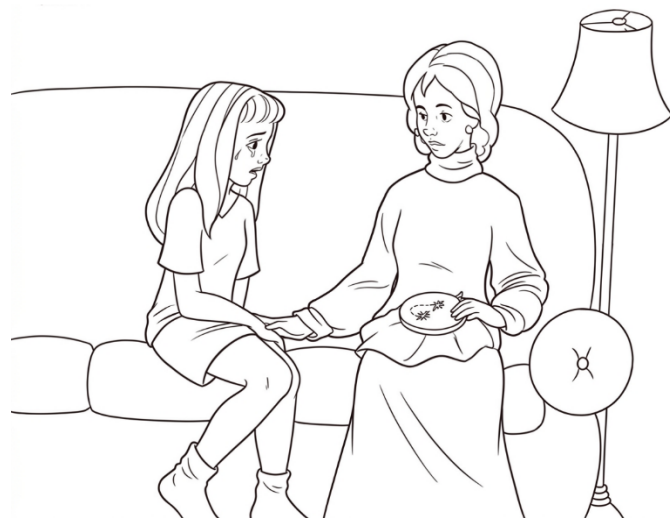
Quietly, Mary Clare, her 16-year-old, entered the room and found a seat on the floor near her mom. Mrs. Pauline could tell she was troubled, but she could not think of a thing that would make Mary Clare unhappy. After all, her dream of having a lead in the spring musical at school had come true. The school had chosen *The Sound of Music*, and Mary Clare was going to play the role of Maria, the young woman who is called from the convent to be governess to a family of energetic children. Mrs. Pauline loved the story and was thrilled for her daughter.

"Come sit next to me, Mary Clare, and keep me warm. The evenings seem so cold lately," she said.

"Mom, I feel so guilty," blurted out Mary Clare. "I don't deserve the part of Maria. My grades aren't good enough." She began to cry and buried her head in her mother's lap.

"Mary, Mary, what is the matter? Of course, you deserve the part," said Mother. "You have worked so hard in the Drama Club and on your voice lessons. You will do a great job."

"But, Mom, you don't understand. I cheated on a chemistry test," Mary Clare cried out.



Mrs. Pauline was taken aback. Her daughter was always so honest. She had never known her to cheat on anything before. Mary Clare was always the one in the family that insisted on fair play. She always reminded the family of the rules of games and demanded that they be followed to the letter. Therese was just about ready to launch into a lecture on the sinfulness of cheating when she stopped. All she could see was her daughter—in tears, heavy with guilt, and feeling condemned by her sin.

Tell me more about it, Mary Clare,” she gently persuaded.

“Mom, you know how I hate chemistry, and I have been so busy getting ready for try-outs that I didn’t take time to study for the mid-quarter exam. Well, the day of the test, I panicked. I knew I had to pass that test or I would not be allowed to be in the play. So I just took some answers from Sheila Sawyer, who sits right next to me. She always aces those tests.” Mary Clare looked perfectly miserable. “Now, what do I do?”

“Well, Honey, I *am* surprised, but I don’t have to convince you that you did wrong. And, I think you know what you have to do next,” said Mom.

“I know,” said Mary Clare softly. “I have to tell the truth. I will have to talk to my chemistry teacher and to the Dean of Students. They will probably give me an ‘F’ on the test and bounce me out of the musical. How could I be so stupid?” She paused and quietly wiped the tears away.

Mom reached over and put her arms around Mary Clare. She wanted to take all the hurt away, but she knew she couldn’t.

“Mary Clare, remember that in John, Chapter 3, it says, ‘*Whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.*’ (John 3:21) When you tell the truth, you will be in the light, and your teachers will respect your actions. We will see what they say. Maybe they will be merciful also.”

A few days later, Mary Clare nearly flew into the kitchen where she found her mom at the sink. She gave her a big hug. “Well, they had their meeting today to decide what to do with me. I have to retake the test in two days and, if I pass, I can have the part of Mother Superior. I have to hurry and study for awhile before supper.” She hugged her mom and raced up to her room.

Therese was sure her daughter had learned a valuable lesson—and she had also.