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## Encouragement

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NCR Today



A whole neighborhood, or at least our block, took note this weekend as a five-year-old

boy named Quinn attempted the first ride on his new two-wheeler. His feet still don't quite touch the ground when he straddles the small green bicycle he will grow into over the next few years. Better to get one too big than too small.

His dad guides him the first few yards until he gets moving fast enough to keep his balance, then he is gone, coasting and pedaling down the long sidewalk. At the end of the block he stops to turn around, falters but stays upright, pushes off and is on his way back, triumphant, his face beaming under his helmet.

"Liberation," his dad says, knowing from memory that his son is now free to go further and further into the big world.

As we enter the season of Pentecost, a guiding hand is withdrawn and gives way to an inner center of balance, self-motivation. Coming of age has its privileges and responsibilities. The world is ours to explore and influence.

Today's first reading from 2 Corinthians is only four verses long, but it contains the word encouragement 10 times. God's encouragement enables us encourage others. Christ's sufferings overflow in us, a witness that radiates outward into our lives and beyond.

Don't be afraid, only go forward. Nothing can stop you except your own hesitation. A cloud of witnesses surrounds you, all those who have gone before us but still remember the thrill of that first ride.

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