THE HUNTER AND THE WOODMAN BY AESOP

A HUNTER, not very bold, was searching for the tracks of a Lion. He asked a man felling oaks in the forest if he had seen any marks of his footsteps or knew where his lair was. "I will," said the man, "at once show you the Lion himself." The Hunter, turning very pale and chattering with his teeth from fear, replied, "No, thank you. I did not ask that; it is his track only I am in search of, not the Lion himself."

LIFE LESSON: The hero is brave in deeds as well as words.

In our dealings with one another we are often like this hunter. We profess (claim openly) that we stand for something but when the full implication of what we profess stares us in the face we draw back (choose not to do something that was expected of us to do). A hero is brave in deeds as well as words.

This fable is a cautionary story against hypocrisy, that is, the practice of claiming to have moral standards or beliefs to which our own behavior does not conform.

We all have the opportunity to be heroes. In school, we will all face difficult situations that require difficult actions. They are difficult because they can cause us hardships at school or problems with our friends.

In school, you will see or know about bullying. You might witness others being peer pressured into doing something they don’t want to do, like drinking, smoking, or sex. You will experience the mean treatment of others, that is, another student engaging in behavior that is unkind (inconsiderate and harsh), spiteful (intention to do evil), unfair (not just), or vicious (cruel or violent), such as someone saying mean things or jokes about someone else.

There is no question that intervening to prevent something like this from being done is very difficult, and requires considerable bravery. It is difficult because we fear that if we intervene we will lose our own social status in school or risk becoming victims ourselves.

But this is exactly what being brave in deeds is about. For those of us who believe in justice, fairness, and kindness toward others, we have a moral obligation to act. This requires considerable courage because we have to not be deterred by the considerable hardship, disapproval or risk that might follow from standing up for our moral standards or beliefs.

Being a hero is not easy. Think of all the heroes who fought for human rights, or for political, economic, or social equality. We admire them for their brave deeds. We respect them because they helped other people and made a positive difference in their life.

Every student deserves to be comfortable, safe, and happy while learning in school. Have the moral courage to act to help ensure the safety and well-being of others who are unable to stand up for themselves. Be a hero today!