

Eleventh Sunday of the Year

The kingdom of God

INTRODUCTION

Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a little mustard seed, which grows from a tiny beginning into something great.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and read this prayer:

At baptism

we are given the light of Christ's love
which burns in our hearts.

As children of the light,
may our goodness shine out for others to see,
so that they too will feel the warmth of God's love
and become part of his kingdom.

SORRY

Let us close our eyes and speak quietly to Jesus in our hearts. (Allow a few moments for quiet reflection.) If we have done anything to make God feel sad or disappointed with us, we ask for his forgiveness as we sing our sorry song together. Sing Sorry song 3.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(All) Alleluia, alleluia.

Reader: Plant your word in our hearts Lord and make it grow.

(All) Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL (cf Mark 4:30-34)

One day Jesus told this parable to the people: 'The kingdom of God is like a tiny mustard seed. Night and day, the little seed sprouts and grows. No-one sees it growing or knows how it happens. Until one day it has become a large and leafy shrub, and the birds of the air find shelter in its many branches.'

Jesus told the people many parables, and later when he was alone with his disciples he helped them to understand their messages.

DISCUSSION

Can you remember what a parable is? – A parable is a short, simple story which Jesus told to explain an important truth or teaching to the people.

In today's parable what did he talk about when explaining about the kingdom of God? – He talked about the tiny mustard seed, and the way that it grows into a large and sturdy plant, to

explain how the kingdom of God can grow. The mustard seed plant and its seeds were a common sight in Israel.

Do you know any small seeds which grow into large plants or trees?

(If possible have some familiar seeds displayed and discuss these with the children e.g. apple or orange pips, conkers, acorns, sunflower seeds. Show the children any pictures you can find of what mighty plants these small seeds can become.)

Jesus often talked about the 'kingdom of God', and in today's parable he tries to explain more about this kingdom. What is the kingdom he talks about?

The kingdom of God is the new way of life that Jesus showed us. To live in this kingdom and be a part of it, means that we live as Jesus taught us. We put the love of God and our neighbour before anything else.

How is the kingdom of God like a mustard seed? – The kingdom of God grows from small beginnings like the tiny mustard seed. The word of God is planted in our hearts, and as we grow in kindness, love, understanding and forgiveness we share it with others and in this way God's kingdom grows too.

ACTIVITY

Copy the illustration and ask each child to link each seed with the plant or tree which it becomes.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus taught us to pray, 'Thy kingdom come', and so we pray that the kingdom of God will grow in our daily lives as we say together: Our Father . . .