

## **Children's liturgy – Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)**

### **Preparation of the worship space**

Colour: green

Props: mustard seeds

**Song suggestions:** Bring forth the kingdom (854, Laudate)

**Welcome:** Today we hear about a tiny little seed. But when it is planted it grows into a big bush with branches big enough for all the birds to come and sit in. Let's think a bit more about what Jesus was trying to say with this story.

**Opening prayer:** Loving God, you show us that the littlest actions can have huge results, and that the smallest of people can do great things. Inspire us to play our part in making the world a fairer place for all people. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Ezekiel 17:22-24

**Psalm:** Psalm 91:2-3. 13-16 r.2

**Gospel acclamation:** everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. Suggestions include: 'Halle, halle, halle' (Caribbean) from 'Sing With the World', Alison Adam & John Bell; 'Alleluia' (Zimbabwe), Abraham Maraire Publications, WCC & GIA; 'Celtic Alleluia' (traditional); 'Alleluia! Raise the Gospel' from 'Go Before Us', Bernadette Farrell, OCP Publications.

**Gospel:** Mark 4:26-34

**Gospel reflection:** In today's gospel, Jesus is trying to show us what God's Kingdom is like. It's not easy to describe, so instead he tells us stories so that we can try to imagine it.

Both the stories he tells are about seeds. We're going to think about the story of the mustard seed. What do you remember about this story?

The mustard seed is a tiny little seed. *You could show the children mustard seeds so that they can see just how small they are.*

But it grows into a very big bush with very big branches. Big enough for birds to be able to come and sit in and get out of the sun.

So, what do you think Jesus is trying to tell us?

Perhaps it's that size doesn't matter – even the tiniest seed can produce a great big tree. And the same is true for us – even the smallest person can do great things. And even the smallest action can have big results.

For example, being kind in the playground and inviting someone to play with you if they look lonely, is just one little thing you can do – it hardly takes any time at all. But to the person who is lonely, it can make a really big difference.

Can you think of any examples of small things that you have done that have made a real difference to other people?

What do you think happens when lots of people join their actions together?

If lots of people do something small, it can make a really, really big difference. A bit like how a drop of water isn't very much on its own, but join it together with thousands of other drops, and you get the great big sea!

One in six people around the world don't have electricity. Without electricity, children can't study after dark, life-saving vaccines can't be kept cold and clean water can't be pumped for families to drink.

Veronica lives with her family in Kenya. She wants to become a politician.

For years Veronica has used a paraffin lamp to study at home in the evenings as her family can't afford electricity. But burning oil made her cough and she found it hard to concentrate. Veronica's hopes of finishing school were starting to become a distant dream.

Now she has new hope. And it's all thanks to the power of the sun. Solar panels have been fitted on her school roof, bringing light to her classroom, and she has a solar powered lamp at home.

Veronica now has the power to study and get good grades. She has the power to build a bright future for herself.

CAFOD's Power to Be campaign is asking the World Bank to support local renewable energy so that children everywhere have the power to achieve great things. And solar power does not harm the planet either.

The campaign is made up of lots of messages from individuals, parishes and schools. Every message, every signature means that someone cares. And this can make a real difference. So far, 30,000 people have sent their message.

And as a result, in December 2017, the World Bank took a big step to protect the planet and the poorest people by saying it will no longer support oil and gas after 2019.

This is a big step forward. And shows how small actions can make a big difference. But we can still add our voices to those asking for change.

Together, small actions add up to make a big difference. The smallest seed can grow into the biggest bush.

What small actions will you take this week to make a difference to other people?

**Intercessions** *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

We join our voices together now in prayer:

We pray for world leaders: that they may have the courage to make the small changes that make a big difference to the lives of others, making the world a fairer place for all to live. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people who are poor: that they may all have the power to study, to change their lives and to build a brighter future. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may be inspired to make a difference, knowing that even the smallest among us can do great things. Lord, in your mercy...

**Closing prayer:** God of all, help us to make a change so all people can live free from poverty and so we may glimpse your kingdom here on earth. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

### **Activity suggestions**

Ask the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and on the back to draw the small actions that they will take to make a real difference to others.

Plant mustard seeds with the children and ask them to look after them at home, watching them grow, so that they can see how the smallest of seeds can become something much bigger.

Find out more about the Power to Be campaign and encourage the children to get involved. Resources to help with this are available from [cafod.org.uk/primary/climate](http://cafod.org.uk/primary/climate)

Ask them to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Ask them to do at least one thing this week to make a difference to others, even if it is only something very small.