

## Children's liturgy – Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

### Preparation of the worship space

Colour: green

Props: coloured paper, coloured pens and pencils

**Song suggestions:** O the word of my Lord (979, Laudate), In the earth (306, Celebration for Everyone).

**Welcome:** Today Jesus tells us a parable about planting seeds. It shows us how important it is that the seeds land on the right kind of ground to grow, but it also tells us something about ourselves and how we should be. Let's listen and find out more.

**Opening prayer:** God of life, help us to hear your word. Guide us to understand it so that we may grow to live our lives the way you want us to. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Isaiah 55: 10-11

**Psalm:** Psalm 64:10-14. R. Lk 8:8

**Gospel acclamation:** *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together.*

**Gospel:** Matthew 13:1-23, *or shorter form Matthew 13:1-9. The shorter form is in bold.*

That same day Jesus left the house and went to the lakeside, where he sat down to teach. The crowd that gathered round him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it, while the crowd stood on the shore. He used parables to tell them many things.

“Once there was a man who went out to sow corn. As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. But when the sun came up, it burnt the young plants; and because the roots had not grown deep enough, the plants soon dried up. Some of the seed fell among thorn bushes, which grew up and choked the plants. But some seeds fell in good soil, and the plants produced corn; some produced 100 grains, others sixty, and others thirty.”

And Jesus concluded, “Listen, then, if you have ears!”

Then the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, “Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?”

Jesus answered, "The knowledge about the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. For the person who has something will be given more, so that he will have more than enough; but the person who has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he has. The reason I use parables in talking to them is that they look, but do not see, and they listen, but do not hear or understand. So the prophecy of Isaiah applies to them:

'This people will listen and listen, but not understand;  
they will look and look, but not see,  
because their minds are dull,  
and they have stopped up their ears  
and have closed their eyes.  
Otherwise, their eyes would see,  
their ears would hear,  
their minds would understand,  
and they would turn to me, says God,  
and I would heal them.'

"As for you, how fortunate you are! Your eyes see and your ears hear. I assure you that many prophets and many of God's people wanted very much to see what you see, but they could not, and to hear what you hear, but they did not.

"Listen, then, and learn what the parable of the sower means. Those who hear the message about the Kingdom but do not understand it are like the seeds that fell along the path. The Evil One comes and snatches away what was sown in them. The seeds that fell on rocky ground stand for those who receive the message gladly as soon as they hear it. But it does not sink deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. The seeds that fell among thorn bushes stand for those who hear the message; but the worries about this life and the love for riches choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. And the seeds sown in the good soil stand for those who hear the message and understand it: they bear fruit, some as much as 100, others sixty, and others thirty."

*(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below\*)*

**Gospel reflection:** What do you remember from today's reading?

Jesus tells a story or parable about someone planting seeds in a field. He does not carefully place the seeds in the ground but scatters them around. The seeds all land in different places, some in good soil and some not. Can you remember all the places the seed lands and what happens to it?

All around the world, people plant seeds to grow. It is really important to make the ground ready, to make sure that the seeds have all that they need to grow. What do seeds need to grow? (*Earth, water, light, food*)

Seeds are very important. They are life. They are a gift from God. And they make growing food possible.

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For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see [cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy](http://cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy)

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But new laws are forcing farmers around the world to buy seeds from big companies who make lots of money, rather than being able to choose which seeds they want to use. These laws make it even harder for small farmers and their families to grow enough food.

Salina is a farmer in Bangladesh and she told CAFOD: "To keep seeds in our own hands is the main thing. Without seeds, being a farmer is not possible."

In today's gospel reading which is all about planting seeds, Jesus goes on to explain his parable and exactly what it means. Can you remember any of what he said?

The seed that falls on the path is like those people who hear what Jesus is saying but don't really understand it or listen to it properly.

The seed that falls on the rocks is like the person who hears what Jesus asks of us and starts off really excited about it, but who gives up following him as soon as it is difficult.

The seed that falls in the thorns is like someone who hears what Jesus says but concentrates too much on having the best things, the most money, rather than on being the person Jesus wants us to be.

The seed that falls on the rich soil is like someone who hears what Jesus is asking, understands it, and lives their life as he asks them to.

So which one do you think we should try to be? How do you think you can be like the seed that falls on the rich soil? How do you listen to what Jesus is saying to you?

How does Jesus ask us to live our lives and treat one another? What can you do to follow him?

This week, see if you can be like the seed that falls on the rich soil – listen to what Jesus asks of you, try to understand it and live your life as God calls you to.

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

We try to listen to Jesus as we pray together:

We pray for world leaders and all people with power: that they may do what is best for all their people, especially those who are poor. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all people that grow crops to feed themselves and to feed others: that they may keep hold of the seeds that they need and have a good harvest. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may be like the seed in the rich soil, listening to Jesus and caring for one another. Lord, in your mercy...

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**Closing prayer:** God of all, guide us as we listen to you, so that we may grow in faith and love. May we share that love with all people throughout the world. Amen.

### **Activity suggestions**

Invite the children to colour in the accompanying illustration and on the back to write or draw what they will do this week to make sure they are like the seed that falls in the rich soil – listening to God’s word and living their lives as God wants them to.

Make a display with the children – draw a seed under the earth and get the children to add all the things that a plant needs to grow – sunshine, rich soil, water, weeding. Then also ask them to add in what they can do to listen to Jesus and to live as he asks us to – so that they grow like the seed in the rich soil.

Use our Seeds for all activity (available at [cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy](http://cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy)) to help the children take part in our Fix the Food System campaign and show their support for Salina and other farmers like her.

Remind the children to share all that they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today with the people at home. Encourage them to see if they can be like the seed in the rich soil – listening to the word of God and living the way God wants us. Maybe they could also plant some seeds and take care of them to see what grows.

**See [cafod.org.uk/families](http://cafod.org.uk/families) for more child-friendly activities.**

\*Gospel passage taken from:

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