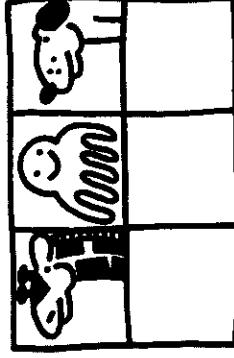
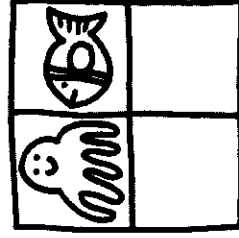
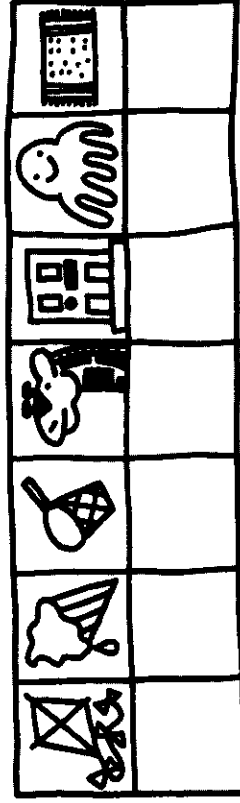
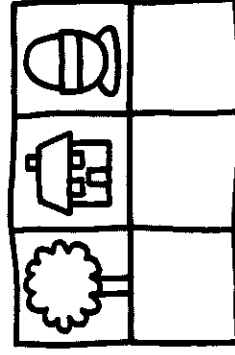


What was Jesus talking about
in these parables?

Write the first letter of each picture in the boxes

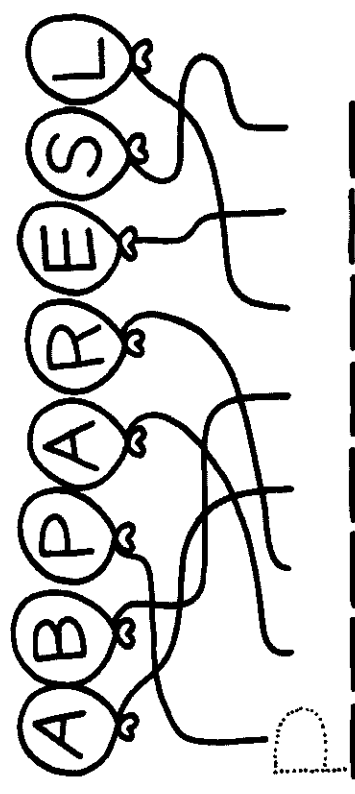


God's kingdom

MARK 4:26-34

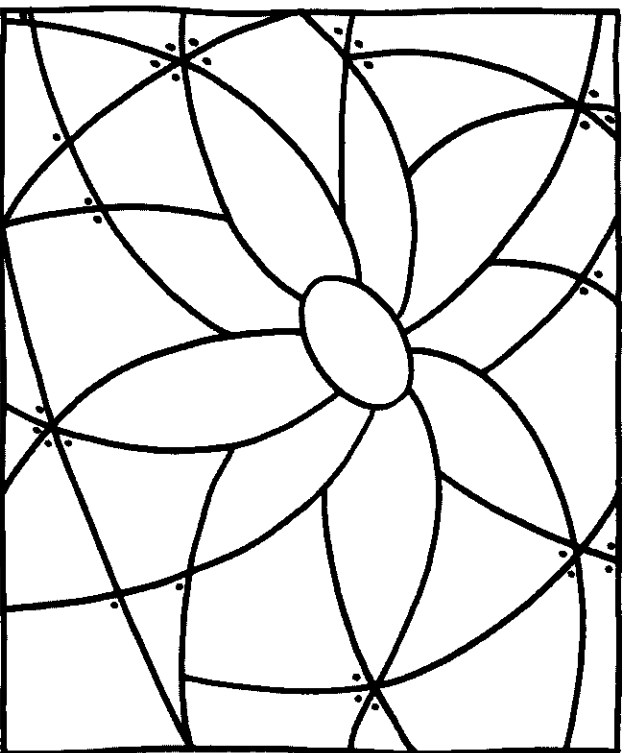
Jesus told simple stories to help us
to understand his message.
What do we call these stories?

Follow the lines to find the letters and write them below



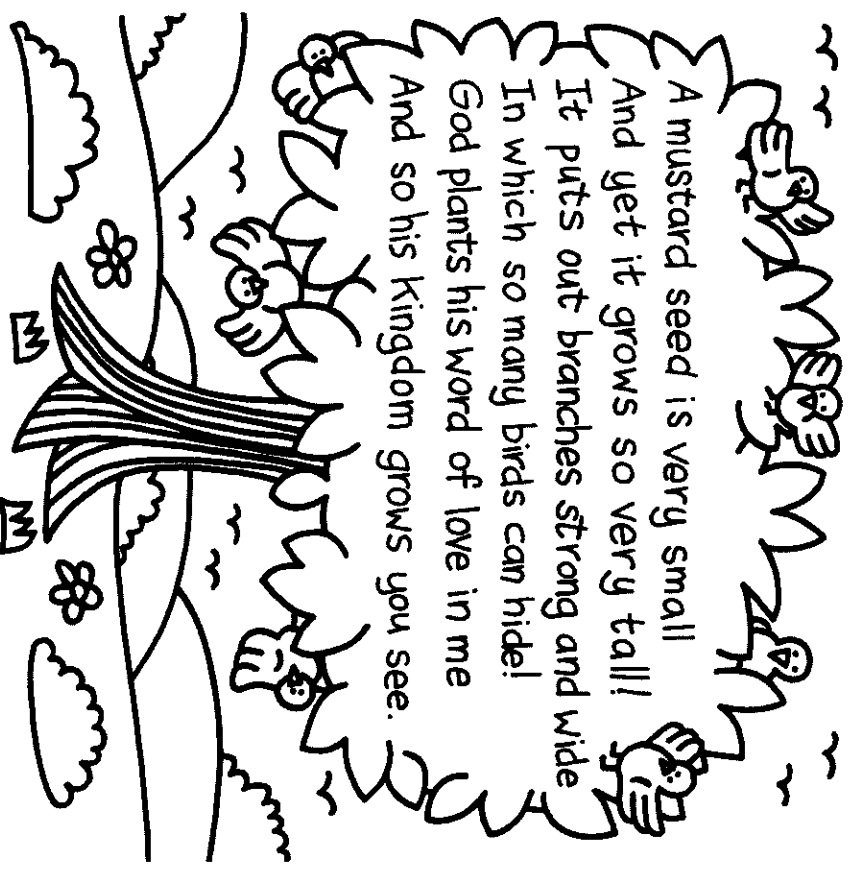
Jesus told a
parable about a seed
growing all by itself!

Color the shapes with a •
to see what the seed grew into



Jesus told another parable
about the mustard seed.

Read the poem and circle the birds hiding in the mustard tree










God's kingdom

MARK 4:26-34

Jesus used simple stories to teach the people and help them to understand his message.






What do we call these stories?




In the box write the letter that is missing from the second word








	In	TAP	but not in	TAN
	In	PAN	but not in	PIN
	In	BREAD	but not in	BEAD
	In	SAW	but not in	SOW
	In	BREAK	but not in	RAKE
	In	BALL	but not in	BAT
	In	MEAT	but not in	MAT
	In	SUN	but not in	FUN



What was Jesus trying to explain in these parables?




Write the first letter of each picture to see!

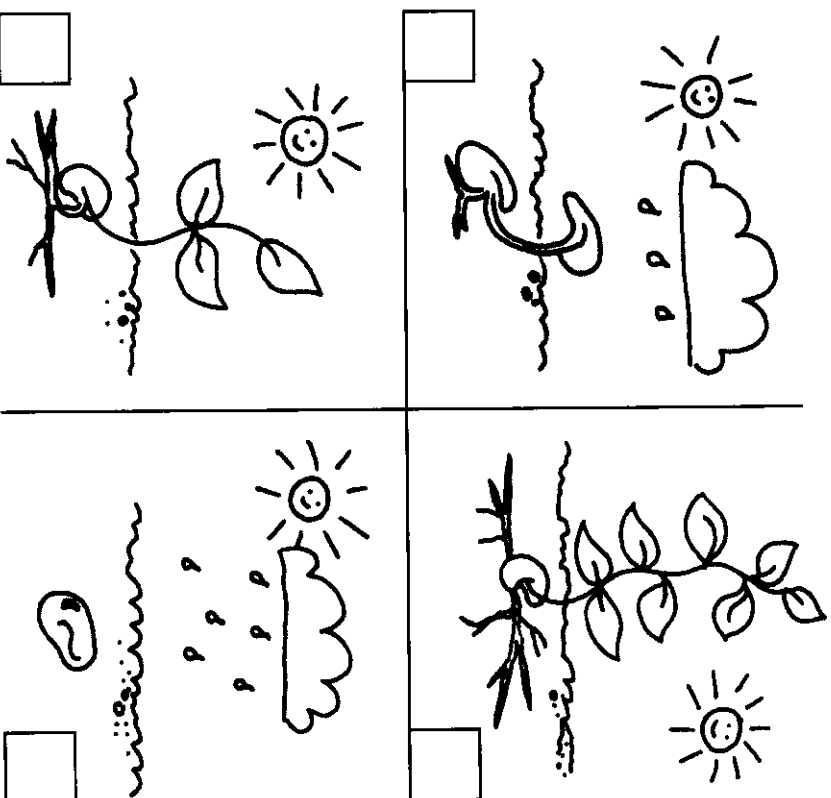
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

Jesus told a parable
about a seed growing by itself to
produce a great harvest!

Can you number these pictures 1 to 4
to put them in the right order?



Jesus told another parable
about the tiny mustard seed.

Can you fit these words into the boxes to complete this poem?

M E

S E E

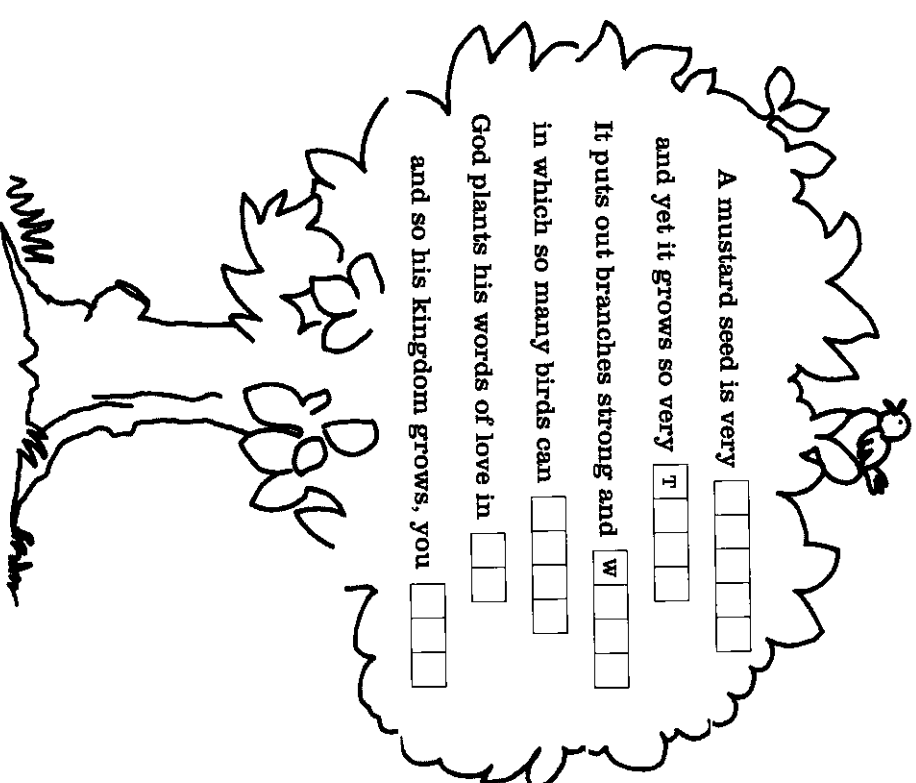
W I D E

S M A L L

T A L L

H I D E

A mustard seed is very [] [] [] [] []
and yet it grows so very [] [] [] []
It puts out branches strong and [] [] [] []
in which so many birds can [] [] [] []
God plants his words of love in [] [] [] []
and so his kingdom grows, you [] [] [] []



Twelfth Sunday of the Year

Focus

A glass bowl filled with water (which could be coloured with food dye) with coloured beads, stones or pebbles at the bottom, and a small boat floating on the water. (Depending on the size of your display, you could have a small candle on an 'island' in the bowl. If you choose to use a floating candle, make sure that it poses no potential fire hazard with the boat you use!)

Introduction

We know that God is almighty and all-powerful. He created the world and everything we know within our universe. Throughout the Old Testament there are many stories that tell of God's mighty power, but it was the Son of God who really allowed us to glimpse something of God's true glory and might!

Gloria

Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 1.

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St Mark (4:35-41)
(See page 383.)

Reflection

Has anyone ever been in a boat? Was it large or small, and did it have an engine, a sail or oars?

Some children might have experienced sailing in large sea-going ferries as they set off on holiday. Such an experience is very different from stepping aboard a small open boat much closer to the water!

Why do we need to take great care when we are in or near a boat?

Even though you might be able to swim, it is still possible to drown if you fall in water that is too deep to stand in. Sensible people always wear life jackets to help them to stay afloat if they accidentally fall in.

What sort of boat were Jesus and his disciples in?

They were sailing in a simple wooden fishing boat that probably wasn't very large.

Where were they going?

They set off to sail across the Sea of Galilee to the opposite shore to escape from the crowds of people for a while, in order to allow Jesus and his disciples a chance to rest.

What happened as they crossed, and why weren't the disciples expecting it?

The calm blue waters of the Sea of Galilee sometimes change to violent storms that blow up suddenly. The strong winds soon whip up large and frightening waves. Unlike fishermen of today, the disciples had no weather forecast to warn them that a ferocious storm was coming.

How did the storm make them feel?

Even though they were experienced fishermen, they were still afraid of the power of the sea, and knew that they could drown if the waves swamped their small boat with water. They rushed to wake Jesus, who was so exhausted that he had managed to sleep through the commotion!

What did Jesus do?

Jesus calmly stood up and commanded the wind and sea to be 'at peace' before asking the disciples, 'Did you not believe in me?' His disciples, who had witnessed Jesus doing many marvellous things, were completely amazed by this display of his almighty power. They believed what had seemed unbelievable, that Jesus had authority over nature itself.

What can this story teach us today?

We should never forget that if we have faith in God's almighty power, then nothing is impossible, even if we seem to be asking him for the unbelievable.

Activity

Using a variety of coloured paper, cut out boat and sail shapes together with rows of waves. These can be used to create a stormy collage by gluing them on to some coloured paper or card together with the words, 'Do not be afraid; believe in me.'

Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family, together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

That the leaders of all governments and nations will uphold and respect the dignity and value of life.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

That lives wounded and scarred by fear and hatred can be rebuilt and healed through peace and reconciliation.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

That people who earn their living from the sea return home safely to their families and loved ones.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

That all who suffer stormy times in their lives may share Christ's peace.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening, in the silence of our hearts let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

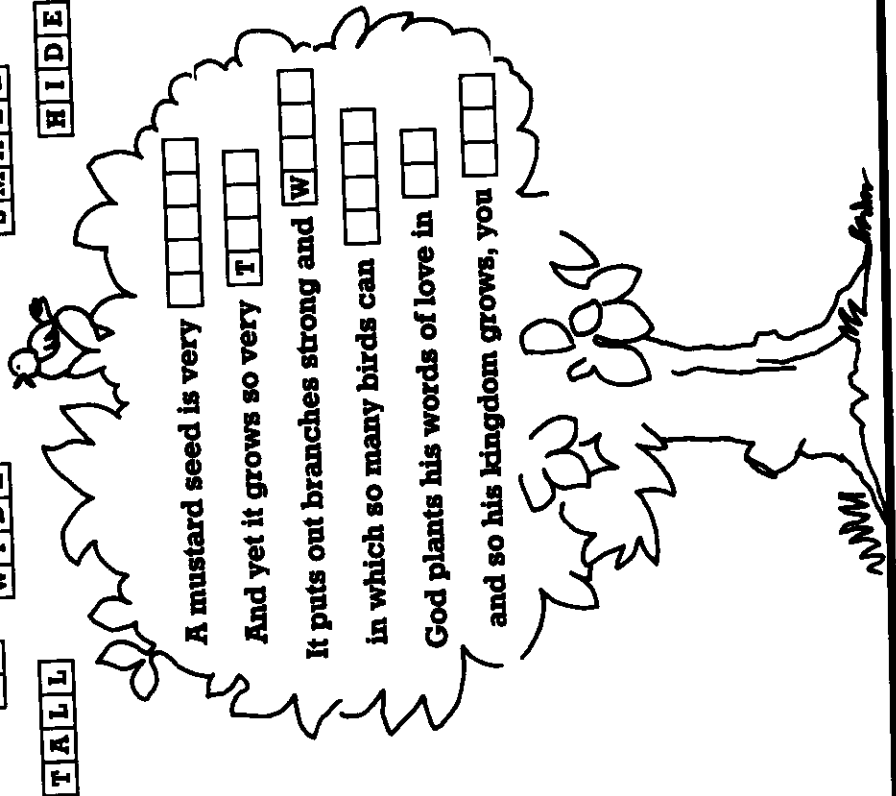
Silence

Loving Father,
listen to the prayers
of the family gathered here before you.
Watch over and protect all your children
and keep us close to your love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Jesus told another
parable about the tiny
mustard seed

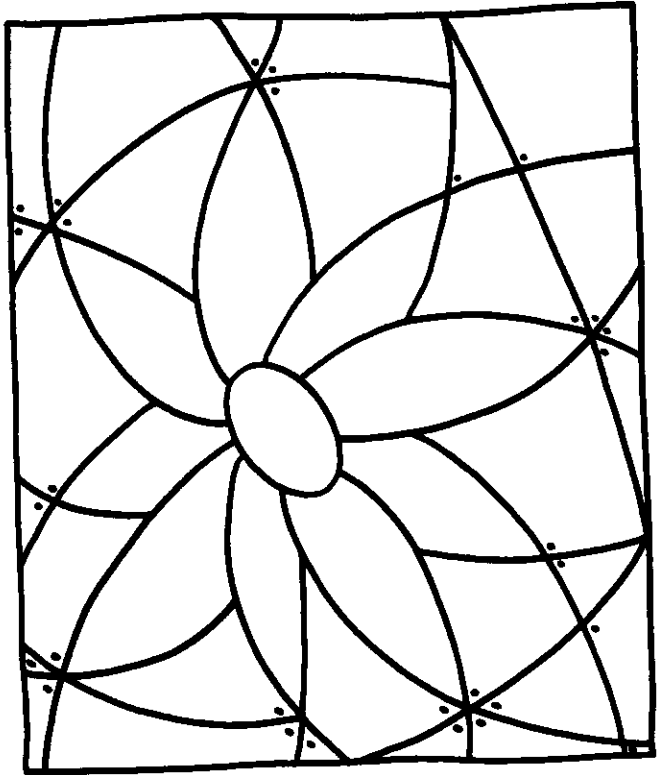
Can you fit these words into the boxes to complete this poem?

SEE WIDE ME TALL
SMALL HIDE

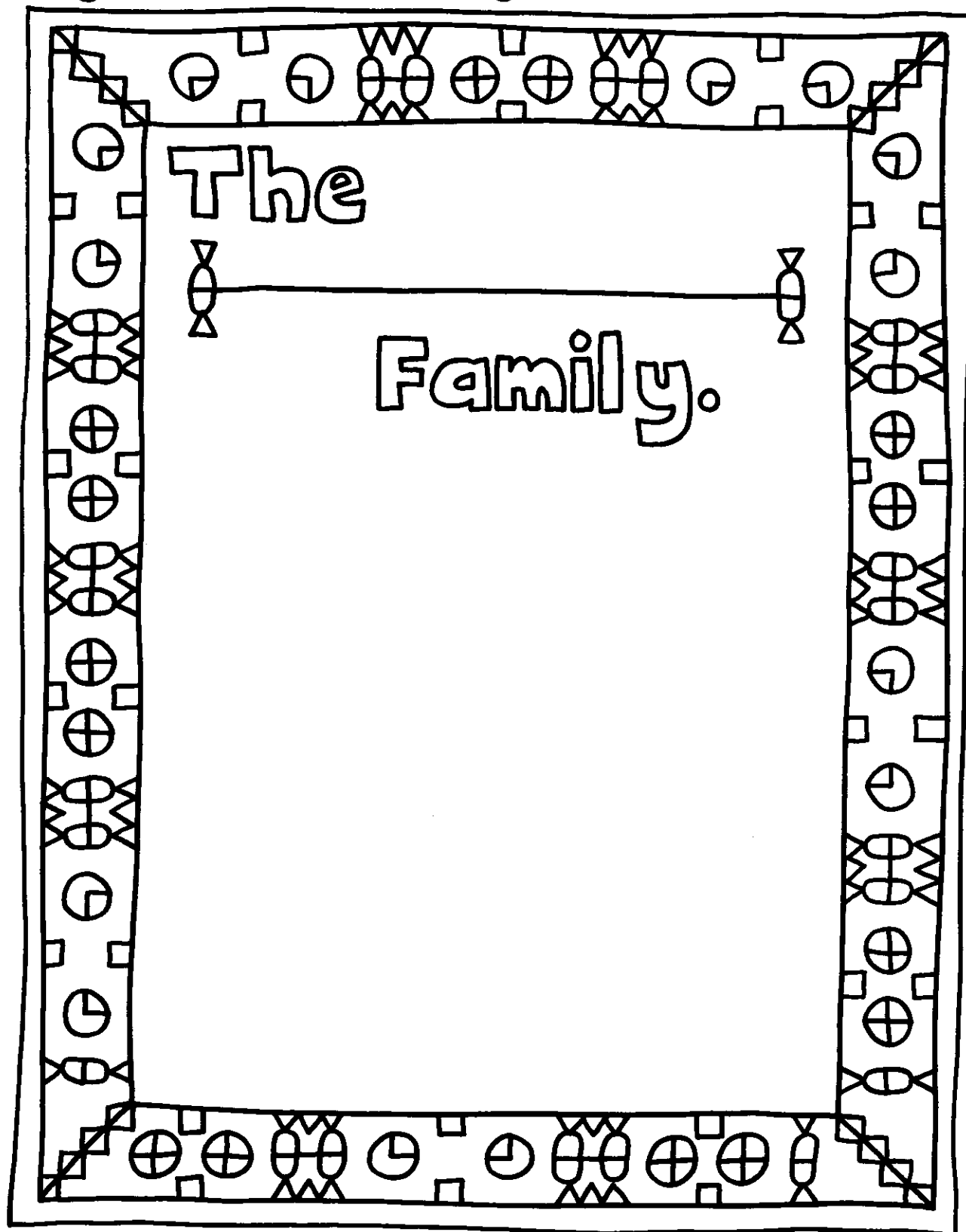


Jesus told
a parable about a seed
growing all by itself!

Colour the shapes with a dot to see
what the seed grew into.



Draw a picture of yourself with
your own family.



Eleventh Sunday of the Year

Focus

A candle and Bible, with cones, sunflower seeds and an apple arranged around them.

Introduction

The kingdom of God is a mystery that began with the coming of the King himself (Jesus) and will be fulfilled in God's kingdom of love and peace in the future. It started as something very small with a handful of faithful followers, but grew to reach out and touch every corner of the earth.

Gloria

Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 7.

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St Mark (4:26-34)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who scatters seed in his field. Hour by hour, through daylight and darkness, the seeds send out shoots and roots, and begin to grow. The man does not know how this all happens, but before long his field is full of crops, and when the harvest is ripe the man begins to reap what he has sown. Or compare the kingdom of heaven to a tiny mustard seed, which becomes one of the largest shrubs, and the birds of the air can 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 what they meant.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

Has anyone ever grown some seeds? What happened?
Sunflower seeds can grow into plants 2.5 metres tall.

Can you think of any other small seeds that grow to become large plants or trees?

Nature is full of mysterious and marvellous wonders that we cannot explain. Look at the size of an apple pip or seed, and think about the large tree it can become. (Cut the apple open to reveal the seeds inside.) The giant Sequoia or Redwood trees grow their seeds in hard, woody cones (show examples). They can reach heights of more than 90 metres and weigh as much as 400 elephants! They are the tallest living things on earth!

With which marvels did Jesus compare the kingdom of heaven?

God's kingdom is like a seed sown by a farmer. The farmer plants it in good faith, confidently believing that it will sprout and grow and produce a rich harvest. He might not see it growing before his eyes, and he might not understand how a small, dry seed is transformed into a tall, lush plant, but he simply believes that given time this will happen.

Jesus also compared the kingdom of heaven to a tiny mustard seed. The size of the seed disguises its potential for enormous growth and eventual size. In the same way, whoever would have dared to believe that a carpenter's son from Nazareth, and a handful of loyal and faithful disciples, would succeed in sharing the Gospel that changed our world for ever.

How does God's kingdom grow in our world today?

The kingdom is not a place as we would normally understand the word 'kingdom' to mean. Instead, it describes the relationship between God and people who accept Christ his Son as their King. Followers of Christ (Christians) try to live by his standards of love and forgiveness for all. God's kingdom continues to grow and spread its branches in our world today, through the love and forgiveness we share with one another.

Activity

Give each child a clean yoghurt pot to fill with compost or soil before planting a sunflower seed. Spend some time discussing what their little seed needs if it is to grow healthy and strong and become a tall yellow sunflower.

Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family, together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

We pray for the Church throughout the world; may God's kingdom come in our daily lives as we live Christ's Gospel of love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for people whose lives are shattered by war or violence; may God's kingdom come through the efforts of those working to bring peace.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the sick and all who suffer; may God's kingdom come through the love and compassion of those who visit and care for them.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the homeless and jobless; may God's kingdom come through our love for one another as we offer help to those in need.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening, in the silence of our hearts let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

Silence

Loving Father,
make us grow in love for you and one another,
and give us the courage and strength
to do your will on earth,
so that your kingdom may come.
Grant this through Christ your Son.
Amen.



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 Sorry Song 3.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

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

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL (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. One day it becomes 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, Jesus 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, orange, chestnuts, acorns, or 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. 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 neighbor before anything else.

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...