



# Parent Page Newsletter

For the parents of children in the CGS Atrium

January 2026

## Parables of the Kingdom

After the Christmas season, the Church's Sunday readings offer us a glimpse of the beginnings of Jesus' ministry--his baptism, the call of the first disciples, and some of his initial teachings in his "Sermon on the Mount," e.g., ". . . *blessed* are the poor in spirit, ... those who mourn, ... the meek, ... the merciful...."

In the atrium, after the Christmas season, we begin listening with the 3–6-year-old children in Level I to Jesus' teachings about the kingdom of God—how he describes it. We hear that God's kingdom is something as marvelous as the tiniest seed growing into "the biggest of shrubs" (Mark 4:30-32), as something expanding and being completely transformed as does yeast-infused dough (Mk 4:33), as the most beautiful and valuable thing one could ever possess (Mt 13:45-46), like buried treasure (Mt 13:44), and like seed that of its own accord is inexplicably growing to an unimaginable and super abundant harvest (Mk 4:26-29), all resulting in a joy wholly immense and unexpected! These parables are particularly appropriate for the young child, as they strike and nurture the child's innate sense of wonder, a characteristic that has been considered the core of the religious person. Children delight in sharing their wonder with adults. A walk with your child through your neighborhood will uncover a myriad of marvels to enjoy together.

In Level II, the 6–8-year-old children return to these parables with a new perspective. They reflect on biblical texts that describe a plan for the kingdom of God, a plan that has always existed in the mind of God so magnificent that it encompasses all of creation, that is unfolding through the vast medium of time, and that God set in motion for one end—for all humankind's enjoyment of fullness of life in God. The vastness of this plan for God's kingdom captures the imagination of the child of this age and results in their desire to participate, to cooperate with God toward its completion—when *all* "the birds of the air" will have found a home in the "tree's great boughs," when "*all* the dough" and "*the entire* field of grain" will have reached their abundant fullness and are ready for "the baking and the harvest," and when this greatest of treasures, the kingdom of God, will have become embraced and valued beyond measure by all. A simple, "I hear you've been talking about the kingdom of God, that it's growing and what it will be like when it is complete," might open a surprising discussion between you and your child.

Children in Level III (9-12 years) look closely at God's plan for creation, a plan for complete union between all human persons and they with God. In reflecting on the multitude of ways throughout history that human beings have been cooperating with this plan, along with the guides Jesus gives us for living in this kingdom—his moral parables and maxims, as well as the Cardinal Virtues—they meditate anew on those parables first heard in Level I. Like the merchant upon finding that pearl of exquisite beauty and value, they can examine and order their valued possessions with that of the beauty and grandeur of the kingdom of God; they come to see the great strength that expands the tiny mustard seed into that magnificent tree as being at work within *themselves*, growing and transforming them into persons who are more capable of collaborating with God's awesome plan for the whole world. Perhaps, in conversations with your child about what they might do as an adult, ask how those choices will be their participation in God's plan for the world.