

KINGDOM

“If we let ourselves, we shall always be waiting for some distraction or other to end before we can really get down to our work... Favourable conditions never come.”
- C.S. Lewis

THE LESSON: MATTHEW 13

To hasten thy kingdom: We beseech thee, good Lord.

Jesus loved to speak in parables. There was nothing like a story to help convey complex truths about God in a way his hearers could relate to. Many of these parables were about the “kingdom of God”. What *is* the kingdom of God? Jesus would answer this question by saying, “I’ll tell you what it’s *like*.”

The kingdom of God starts small and grows exponentially: it’s like a mustard seed that way (Matthew 13:31-32). God invites us into his kingdom and we have a choice to make: just like guests invited to a wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14). The workers of the kingdom are expected to treat others with the same mercy they have been shown: like a servant whose debt has been cancelled (Matthew 18:23-35). And there is eager and vigilant anticipation of the King’s return: like a wedding party waiting for the bridegroom to appear (Matthew 25:1-13).

Those of us who belong to the Church are like seeds, with the kingdom of God planted in us, growing and bearing fruit. As Jesus said, “the kingdom of God is in the midst of you” (Luke 17:21). But that’s not all there is to the story. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come”, because we do not live in a world that acknowledges the kingship of Jesus. So we look forward with longing to the return of the King and an eternal kingdom in which his will is truly done. And in the meantime, we’ve got a job to do.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcp-online/family-prayer))

Each day this week find or write a prayer for someone different in your parish. After taking time to pray it through slowly and sincerely, send that person a text or email to let them know you’ve prayed for them.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this prayer.

Most merciful Father, we beseech thee to send down thy heavenly blessing upon thy Church in this Parish, that all its members may dwell together in unity and brotherly love. Keep far from us all self-will and discord. Endue thy Ministers with righteousness, and enable them faithfully to dispense thy holy Word and Sacraments, to bring again the outcasts, and to seek the lost. Grant that we may so receive their ministrations, and use thy means of grace, that in all our words and deeds we may seek thy glory and the advancement of thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (PRAYER FOR THE PARISH (FROM FAMILY PRAYERS), BCP PAGE 736)

KINGDOM

MATTHEW 13: **GROWING UP IN THE KINGDOM**

²⁴Jesus put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, ²⁵but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’ ²⁸He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”...

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴²and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.