

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



FAMILIES RECLAIMING SUNDAY

Read aloud: Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15
1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9

“Time to prepare for Mass!” Mrs. Pauline called to the children. As they gathered around the kitchen table, they couldn’t help but notice a spindly plant—or was it just a twig in a pot of dirt—in the middle of the table.

“Where did *that* dead thing come from?” Mary Clare asked. “It’s sure seen better days. Do you want me to take it to the basement?” she asked her mom.

“No, it actually is here to help us understand our Scripture today,” Mrs. Pauline explained.

“Oh no, another visual aid, I bet,” Vincent said, rolling his eyes.

“Right you are,” said Mr. Pauline cheerfully. “Now, Lucy, Jesus tells a parable in today’s Gospel. Would you read it for us? It’s Luke, chapter 13, verses 6 through 9.”

Lucy found Luke’s Gospel and read the Scripture.

“Oh, I get it!” Hillary said. “Mom’s dead plant is like the fig tree!”

“That’s right, Hillary,” said Mrs. Pauline. “A lot of people would look at this plant and say, ‘What’s the use of trying to get it to grow? Why not just throw it out?’ But I’m going to fertilize it and clean out the soil a little bit, and we’ll all see what it looks like at Easter time.”

“I’ll bet it will be green and healthy!” Hillary said with a smile.

“We’ll keep an eye on it, Hillary,” Mr. Pauline said.

“There’s no way that plant will come back to life!” Vincent said skeptically.

“Well, you might be right there, Vincent, but we’ll just have to wait and see. Now, you all remember that Jesus used parables to teach a lesson, right? So, what was Jesus teaching about in this parable?”

“I think that this story shows how patient Jesus is with us,” Mary Clare said. “Even when it looks like we don’t have any life in us, spiritually that is, He’s still patient and gives us another chance.”

“Yes, Mary Clare, that’s right,” Mrs. Pauline said. “Jesus has promised to help us grow. But, did you notice that last verse? If we don’t bear fruit, we will be cut down.”



"What does bear fruit mean, Mom?" Lucy asked.

"Well, when you're talking about plants, bearing fruit means that the plants produce new life or growth," Mrs. Pauline explained. "For us as Christians, bearing fruit means living a Christian life and growing in the Lord."

"So, Mom is going to fertilize this plant to help it grow. Fertilizer helps improve the quality and quantity of a plant's growth. What are some things we can do to help us grow spiritually?" Mr. Pauline asked.

"Read the Bible?" asked Lucy.

"Pray more?" Hillary volunteered.

"Go to the sacrament of Reconciliation!" said Mary Clare.

"Fasting from food or something else we might like," said Vincent.

"GREAT ideas, Kids. Doing any of those things would help us grow closer to Jesus," Mr. Pauline said.

"Now, Mom is also going to clear away any stones or weeds in the plant's soil. This is called cultivating. What are some things we *shouldn't* be doing if we want to grow spiritually?"

"Sinning," said Hillary somberly.

"Being selfish," said Lucy.

"Being lazy," said Vincent.

"Arguing," said Mary Clare.

“You guys have the idea!” Mr. Pauline said. “Right now, we’re midway through the best ‘growth time’ for Christians: the season of Lent. If we keep working on doing more of the good things you mentioned, and ask God to help us remove the sins, we’ll be ready to celebrate Easter in a few weeks.”

“We’ll be blooming like an Easter flower!” said Hillary enthusiastically.

“We might be ready for Easter, but I really don’t think that plant is going to make it,” Vincent said, pointing to the pathetic little twig of a plant. “It would take a *miracle* to get some life into it!”

“Funny you should say that, Vincent,” said Mrs. Pauline, taking a box out from under her sink. “A miracle it needs; *Miracle Grow* fertilizer it gets!”

The Paulines listed some things that help us grow closer to Jesus.

Can you think of more?

Our sins are like weeds—they stop our spiritual growth.

Think of one sin that is preventing you from growing closer to Jesus.

Ask Him to help you overcome this sin during Lent.

What specific area could you, as a family, concentrate on changing?

Ask Jesus for His power to remove that area of sin.