

# A Peek Into The Atrium



## Parables of Jesus: Learning About the Kingdom of Heaven

During this season of Ordinary Time after Christmas, we have a window before Lent when we reflect on the Kingdom of Heaven. In the atrium we listen to the scriptures that share the parables (or stories) Jesus told to help us answer the question “What is the Kingdom of God like?” We share two parables per year with each child, depending on how long the child has been in the atrium and depending upon the child’s age. By the end of three years, or by age 6, your child will likely have heard all (at least most) of these parables.

- ❖ Parable of the Mustard Seed - Mark 4:30-32  
We look together at the tiny mustard seeds from Israel and the photo of mustard tree, and wonder how something so small could grow so large. Children in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year will hear this parable again and consider if the power in the mustard seed can be found in other seeds. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year they will consider if the same power could even be inside of them.
- ❖ Parable of the Precious Pearl – Matthew 13:45-46  
Using the figure of the Merchant and his house and boxes of pearls, we think about what could be so precious that the merchant would sell what he has to buy that pearl.
- ❖ Parable of the Leaven – Matthew 13:33  
This is a favorite work! With it, the child may mix the water, flour and work the leaven all through, then watch as the dough rises and grows, and enter into the wonder of how God’s Kingdom grows.
- ❖ Parable of the Hidden Treasure – Matthew 13:44  
This work is for the older child (4+) who is able to sit and listen with no materials. We share the scripture and reflect together on what can be so attractive about God’s Kingdom, that it brings such great joy?
- ❖ Parable of the Seed – Mark 4:26-28  
We share this work with the older children, again without concrete materials. Through it we reflect on the scattering of the seed and the mystery of how God’s kingdom grows.

I invite you to sit with these parables as well. Allow them to be planted deep within you, nurture them, and witness to the growing of God’s Kingdom in us all.