

# Planting Seeds of Faith – Discussion and Reflection Questions

This reflection encourages youth to think about how they need to pay attention to their faith to help it grow.

*Start with a hands-on activity. Have some easy to grow seeds, [peat pots](#), and potting soil on hand, along with something for scooping out the soil. Suggestions for seeds are marigolds, zinnias, sunflowers, or any easy to grow flower.*

*Have each youth plant a few seeds in their pot. Explain the planting directions for the type of seed they are planting. They should plant several seeds in the pot. This will take a few minutes. When everyone is ready, start the discussion.*

Right now everyone has planted some seeds. But these seeds won't grow without a little care.

- What will you need to do to help your seeds grow?
  - The plants will need water.
  - They will need the right type of sun.
  - They will need to be thinned so they have room to grow.
  - They will need to be moved to a different container or planted in the ground when the starter pot is no longer enough for them.

So these plants are going to need some care. But if you pay attention to them, the little seed you started with will turn into a much bigger plant. And it will produce beautiful flowers.

Read the gospel:

[Mark 4:26-34](#) (The Parable of the Farmer and the Parable of the Mustard Seed) – the Gospel Reading for the [11th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B](#)

Jesus said to the crowds: "This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise night and day and through it all the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come."

He said, "To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.

#### [Mark 4:26-34](#)

In this gospel, Jesus tells us two parables about growing . He explains that the Kingdom of God can start small, but eventually can grow into something much bigger. It starts with our own tiny seed of faith. Like the small seeds we planted, we must follow the instructions to get our faith off to a good start.

- What are some of the instructions we have for growing our faith? (Scripture, Church teachings, 10 Commandments, Beatitudes...)
- How do these things give us a good foundation for growth?

We also need to care for our faith. We must give it water and sunlight to help it grow. These are like the things which sustain our faith week after week.

- What are some of the things which we must do over and over again to keep our faith healthy? (Go to Mass, come to youth group, participate in service, pray...)
- How do these things help our faith to thrive?

We planted several seeds in our containers, just so we'd be sure something comes up. But if more than one sprouts, you will need to thin them by pinching off the extra plants. If you have more than one plant, then when the plants grow they will crowd each other out. In the same way, we need to remove things from our life which might keep our faith from growing.

- What are some things which might crowd out your faith life? (Too many activities, peer pressure, temptations...)
- What happens when you don't notice these things and they grow?

Finally, your plant will have to eventually be moved to a different container or outside. These pots we used are meant to fall apart eventually to give the roots to space to grow. If the plant is too confined when it gets bigger, then it can never fully develop and bloom. In a similar way, we will need to move from where we are comfortable into new places in order to develop and grow the Kingdom of God.

- How or when might you need to leave your comfort zone? (Graduate high school, meet new friends, do a service project for unfamiliar people...)
- How will these things help you grow in faith and help the Kingdom of God grow?
- What are some challenges you face in continuing to grow in faith?

As you can see, growing a plant from a tiny seed takes some work. We can't just forget about it. If we don't care for our little plant on a regular basis, it won't survive. This is like the seed of our faith. It may start small, but if we pay attention to it and nurture it, then it will grow and what we do will help increase the Kingdom of God.

Take your planted seeds home and care for them. Be patient. Growing something takes time. Every day, when you check on your plant, say a little prayer to God asking for the grace for your faith to grow also.