

Year A

Seventeenth Sunday of the Year

Priceless treasure

INTRODUCTION

Today Jesus tells us a story to explain that the kingdom of heaven is like a priceless treasure that we would swap our most precious possessions for.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light our candles today, we will say together Candle Prayer 2.

SORRY

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, he said the Our Father, or the Lord's Prayer. In it he reminds us all that God will "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others."

Do you understand what this means? (Allow the children to share their thoughts.) It means that we will be forgiven in the same way that we forgive others who hurt us. Help us to remember this as we say the Our Father together.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 4.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 13:44-46)

Jesus said to the crowds, "One day a man was digging in a field when his spade struck a box which was buried there. When he opened the box he was amazed to find it was full of treasure. He quickly buried the treasure again, went away, and sold his house and all that he owned. With the money he made, he bought the field from the farmer, and then ran back and dug up the treasure.

"There was another man who was a merchant who bought and sold pearls to earn a living. One day he happened to find the most perfect, beautiful pearl he had ever seen. He, too, went away and sold everything so that he would have enough money to buy that pearl for himself."

Jesus said, "God's kingdom is the real treasure, as perfect and precious as the pearl; you would give up

everything you have for it, because it is worth more than anything else in the whole world."

DISCUSSION

Do you have something which is very precious to you, which you treasure more than anything else? It might be a toy, a book, a favorite teddy, or some item which is not important to other people but means a great deal to you.

Do you treat your treasure carefully because it means so much to you? Would you be willing to give it away or swap it? Jesus wanted us to understand that God's love for us is like priceless treasure. It means more than any possession we have on earth; it is worth giving up everything we own to have it.

What must we do to find the treasure of God's kingdom? By living as Jesus taught us and following his example, we will have God's love which is worth more than all our worldly possessions. Some qualities that exemplify this way of living are: sharing, loving, forgiveness, kindness, generosity, honesty, and truthfulness. By living in this way, we are sharing in God's kingdom now on earth, the greatest and most precious treasure.

ACTIVITY

Cut out the large treasure chest and several jewels. Entitle the jewels with some of the words listed above or add your own suggestions (the children may come up with some of their own). Decorate the jewels imaginatively! Label the chest "God's Kingdom" and fill it with the priceless jewels.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, help me
to store up my riches in heaven,
not on earth,

To know what is important
and not to waste my time
on worthless things.

To always speak the truth
and do what you ask
because of the love I have for you.

(Psalm 119:36-37, 43-44)

