

A NOTE TO PARENTS

The idea of *holiness* is intimately tied up with what we celebrate on this day, Trinity Sunday. Whenever our worship calls on us to contemplate the Trinity, the Three-in-Oneness of God, it asks us to use the language of *holiness*, *blessedness*, or *glory*: “*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.*”

Most of us probably think of “the Trinity,” if we think of it at all, as an intellectual puzzle; we may balk at being asked to formulate the mystery of God’s Being in this way, or we may just mildly wonder what it is all supposed to be about. An answer often given is that this formula is our way of expressing our experience of God. We encounter God as our Maker, our Redeemer, and our Sustainer; as Father, Saviour, and Indwelling Spirit. This is true. But the concept of the Trinity as it is used in our worship serves rather to draw us into contemplation of *God’s experience of God*: the life of the Godhead in its own self-existing structure. The divine life itself is a life in relationship, a complex design like the structure of the atom, bound together by love. Our drawing near to that life in worship draws us, through adoration and mystery, ever more deeply into love.

We speak readily to children of God’s love, but often neglect the idea of God’s holiness through which the church has experienced that love. This may distort children’s own spirituality: they may come to expect that their sense of God should be easy and intimate, when in fact it may contain more of awe, wonder, longing and even fear. The Bible, Prayer Book and Hymnal offer a great richness of expression in approaching the mystery of God’s Being—far more than we customarily use ourselves or think of making available to children. Take some time with your children to explore your own experiences of God’s holiness, through drawings and through words, and make an effort to enlarge the vocabulary you use in family worship and in speaking to your children of the “*holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, one God.*”

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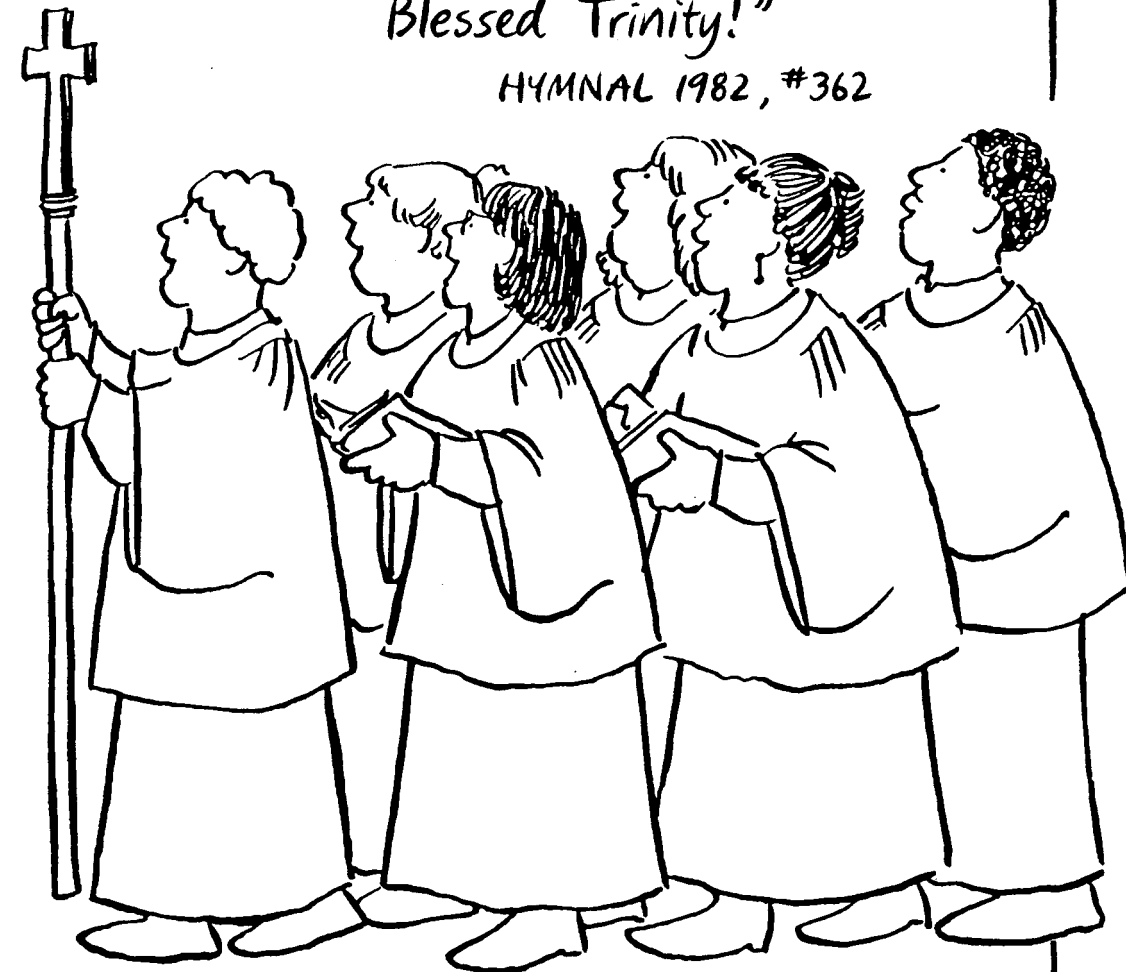


THE SUNDAY PAPER JUNIOR

TRINITY
SUNDAY

“*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons,
Blessed Trinity!*”

HYMNAL 1982, #362



THIS IS TRINITY SUNDAY.

On Trinity Sunday, we think about who God is. We learn who God is from the Bible, and from church, and from praying to God and trying to obey him.



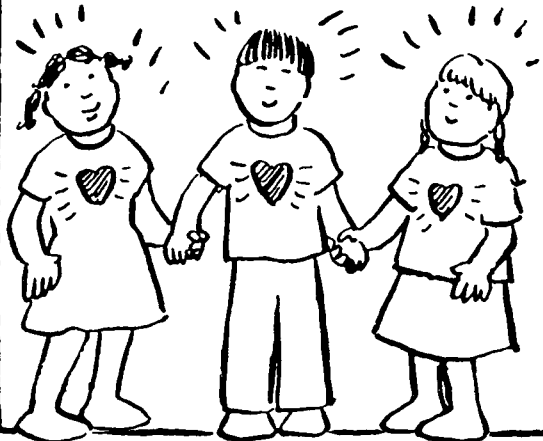
God made us and loves us. Jesus said we could call God our FATHER.



God came to live with us. That was Jesus. Jesus is God's SON.



God lives in our hearts, to fill us with love and help us do his work. That is God's SPIRIT.



We say God is HOLY. ("Holy" means "filled with wonderful, shining goodness.") And we say God is "three-in-one:" FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT.

That means God is not just one self, but three selves joined by love. God is HOLY; God is LOVE.

God's holiness can give us powerful feelings. It can make us want to kneel down, or sing, or dance, or shout, or hug someone, or cry...

Draw your idea of God's holiness. Draw yourself or your feelings as you think about God.

THE SUNDAY PAPER

Year B
TRINITY
SUNDAY

This Sunday is TRINITY SUNDAY. The word TRINITY means "three-ness." TRINITY is a special name for what we know about God. Christians say that there is only one God, and he comes to us in three ways: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thinking about the TRINITY helps us to remember some very important ideas about God.

First, it helps us remember that Jesus, God's Son, is truly God. When Jesus was born, that was God, becoming human. When Jesus died, that was God, sharing our death.

Second, it reminds us that God's SPIRIT is also truly God. God made the world. God came to us and died for us. And God is always with us, in our hearts and in his Church!

In our Bible readings ever since Advent, we have been learning about what God has done. Now, on Trinity Sunday, we pause to think about what God is. The Trinity shows us that God is not simple. He is complicated and surprising, just like the world he made. And he is not just one self. He is three selves, held together by love. God does not just give love. God is love, through and through. He is "God in three persons, blessed Trinity!"

ISAIAH 6:1-8 God is HOLY and full of GLORY
The angels worship God, crying out, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY"




PSALM 29 God is HOLY and MIGHTY, God is KING
"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness... in the temple, the people cry, 'Glory!'"



JOHN 3:1-16 God loves us, and gave us his SON
God loved the world so much that he gave his only SON, to save everyone who believes in him"



ROMANS 8:14-17 God gives us his SPIRIT
"When we call God FATHER, that is his SPIRIT in us, making us God's children, along with his SON Jesus"



A NOTE TO PARENTS

The scribes are saying that Jesus must be in league with Satan—exactly the temptation that Jesus has already faced and rejected in the wilderness after his baptism. After such deep wrestling with the spiritual forces that rebel against God, he is confident that his miracles are not stunts, performed in order to bully people into acknowledging his status as Messiah. Rather, they are confirmations of that status—they are displays of the nature of his power (a power to heal and restore)—for those who already believe in it. But for those who will not look and listen with an open heart, they are threatening. They arouse suspicion. They lead to murmuring, accusations and slander.

His extended family shows up to try to coax him back home and out of the fray. Even those who have every reason to love and trust him are suspicious, if not that he is in league with Satan, then at least that he is “out of his mind,” which would have been understood as being *tormented* by Satan. And Jesus draws a line in the sand: *Whatever your preconceptions—whether they arise from fear or from love—if you will not look and see what I am doing, you have no claim on me.*

These nuances are difficult to present to children. But we can talk about the importance of looking closely—of seeing things the way they really are, and not the way they used to be or the way we are afraid they must be. No learning and growth, and especially no spiritual growth, are possible if we will not at least try to look and listen and see God’s world, and other people, for what they are.

People and things we see every day may be quite different from what we think. Ideas and events may be much less scary than we feared at first. People—especially children!—grow and change. Practice looking closely at things with your child. Talk about the way we may misjudge people and situations if we do not look and listen closely.

The eight differences between the two pictures are: 1) eyebrows on bald man at left; 2) hand of bald man at left; 3) expression on face of the formerly paralyzed man; 4) motion blur lines around woman’s hand; 5) details in halo around Jesus’ head; 6) frayed end of rope extending from stretcher; 7) beard of man at right rear; 8) stripe on sleeve of man at right.

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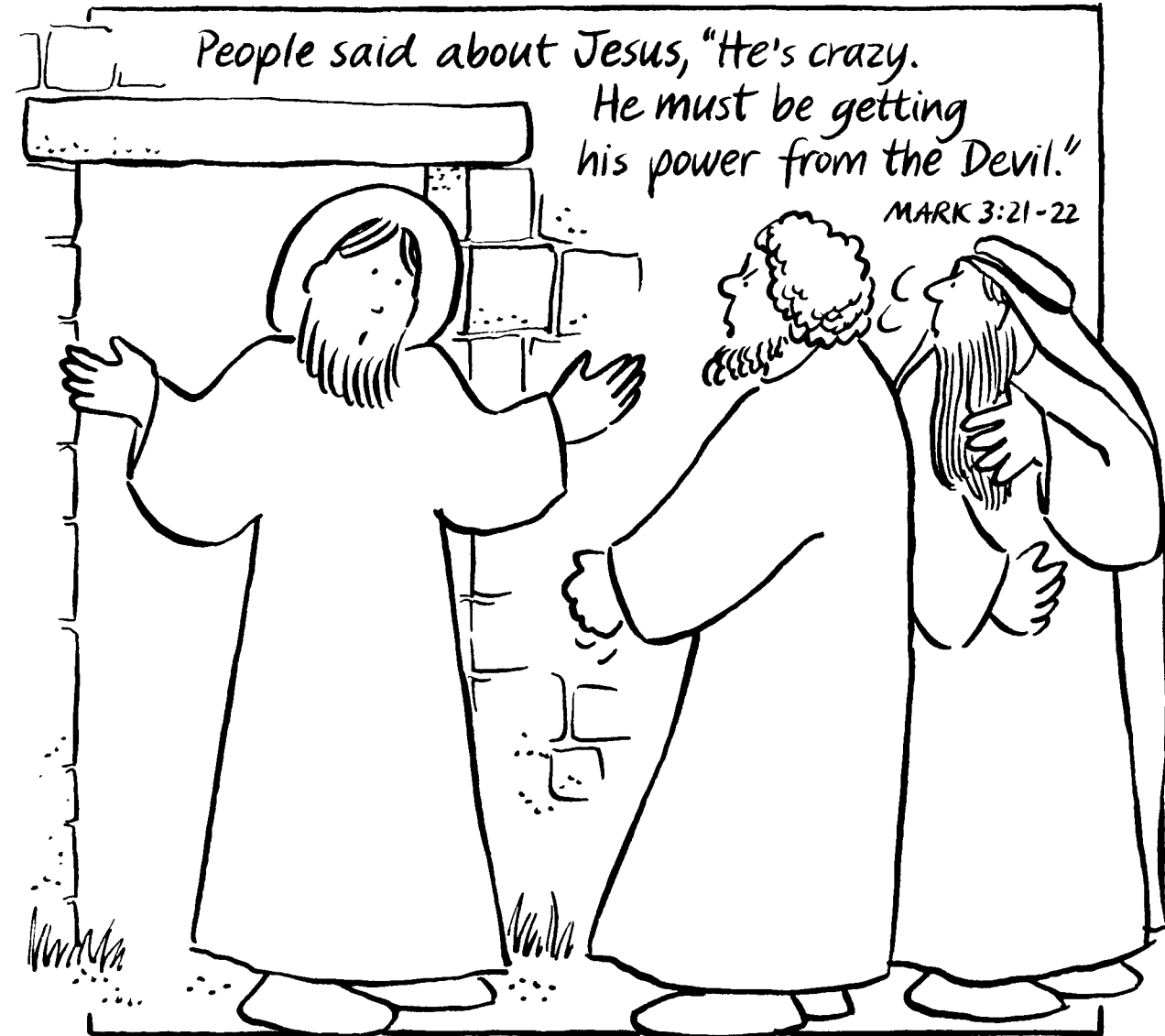
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Year B
PROPER 5
TRACKS 1 and 2



Jesus was famous! He was famous because he could heal sick people...



... and he went everywhere, talking about God's Kingdom.



People were amazed at the way he talked. He seemed to know so much about God!



But some people said, "How does he do all this? He must have a secret power from the Devil."



When Jesus heard people say that his power must have come from the Devil, he told them, "Can't you see? The Devil is evil. The Devil would never want to do the good things that I do."

These people were scared of Jesus because he did such amazing things. They didn't believe that he would only want to do good. They did not really look or listen, or they would have seen how different and special he was.



These pictures look alike. But there are eight differences between them. Look closely. Can you find them all?

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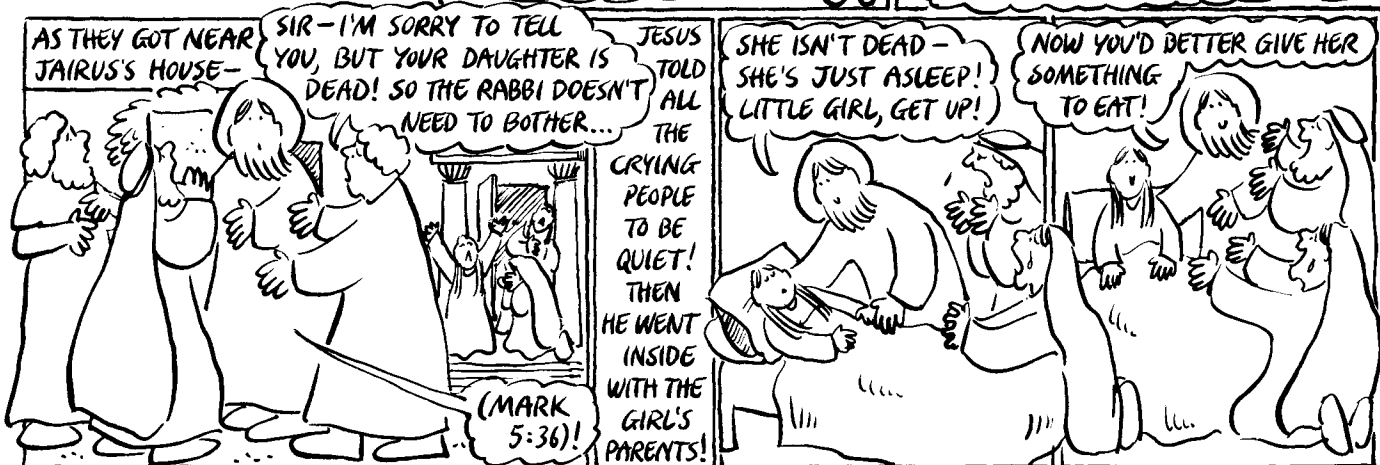
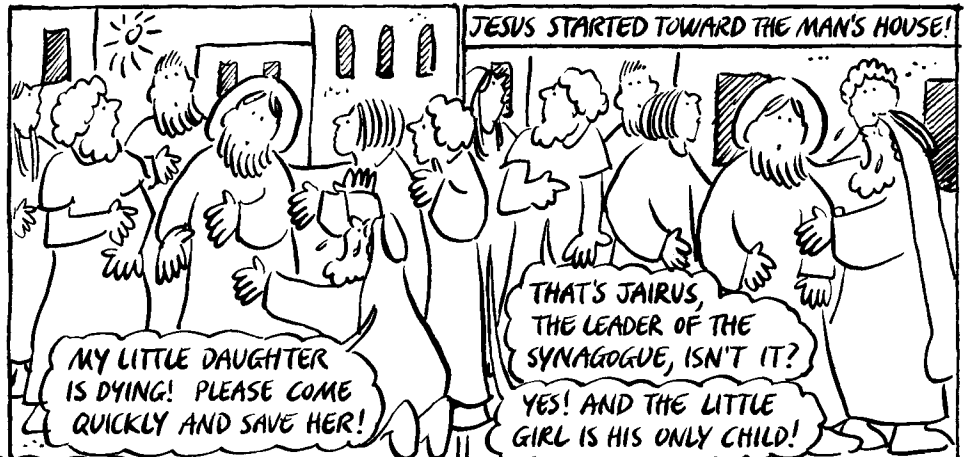
Year B
PROPER
8
TRACK
2

Most of the MIRACLES that Jesus did were healings.
He showed God's power and love by giving health to the sick!

JAIRUS'S DAUGHTER

Mark 5:21-43

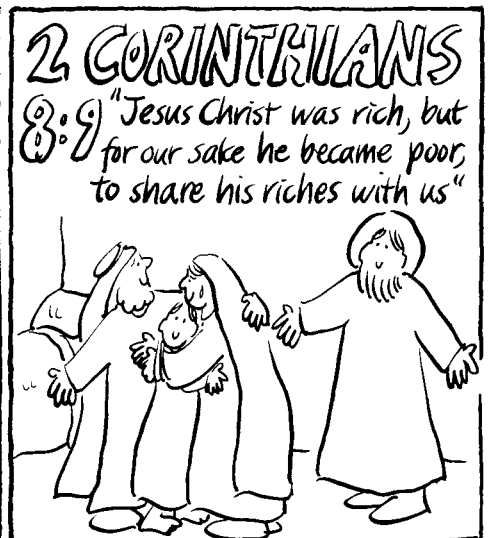
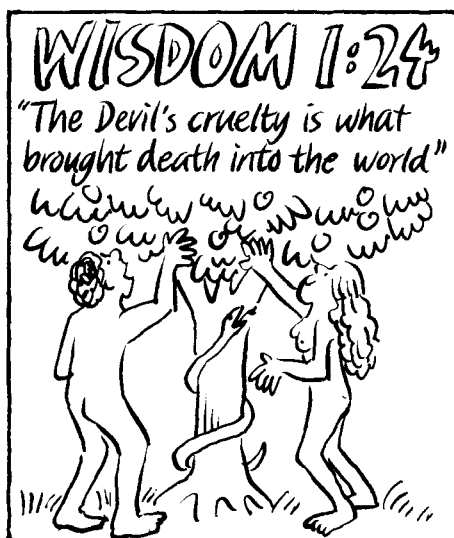
ONE DAY, A MAN CAME RUNNING UP TO JESUS. THIS MAN WAS AN IMPORTANT LEADER IN THE SYNAGOGUE!



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People followed Jesus everywhere he went, asking him to heal them or to come and heal someone they loved. Mark, who tells us the story of Jairus's daughter, says that Jesus was delayed on his way to Jairus's house, because a woman who had been sick for twelve years reached out to touch him so that she could get better. She did get better!

The Bible tells us that God made the world to be full of life. It is God's Enemy that has brought death into the world. God wants all his people to have life and joy forever. That is why Jesus came to die and rise again for us!



A NOTE TO PARENTS

And he said, "The Kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear ..."

Mark 4:26-28

Jesus speaks often of seeds and crops as images for God's Kingdom. Here, the focus is on growth, from the insignificant little seed to the ripe plant, bearing fruit, ready for harvest. This growth is the work of the seed and the earth, not the farmer, who simply goes about his business as the seed sprouts and grows, "he knows not how." In creating us, Jesus seems to say, God has built right into us the ability to grow into finished creatures.

The language of *growth* gets frequent use in the Church and the helping professions today. Not only children, but adults, are urged to "grow and change," to develop and progress. This kind of organic, dynamic image comes naturally in our society. But what we may fail to notice is that Jesus hardly ever speaks of "growth" in isolation: "growth," for him, is not open-ended, but is always associated with "bearing fruit." God wants us to grow, but not for our own self-realization or so that we can look back with pleasure on how much progress we have made. God wants us to grow so that we can yield to him the "fruit" of our growth: the harvest of a life given over to his love and service according to whatever gifts he has given us. And as each crop bears a different kind of fruit, so each of us will offer a different harvest to the Lord.

You can talk about "bearing fruit" with your child as you think of your own life and work in the light of God's Kingdom. What does your child want to be when he or she grows up? How do the different things that people do "bear fruit" for God's Kingdom? And if you are lucky enough to have a vegetable garden, give thanks to God for the wondrous variety of crops that "sprout and grow, you know not how," and bear fruit for your family's table.

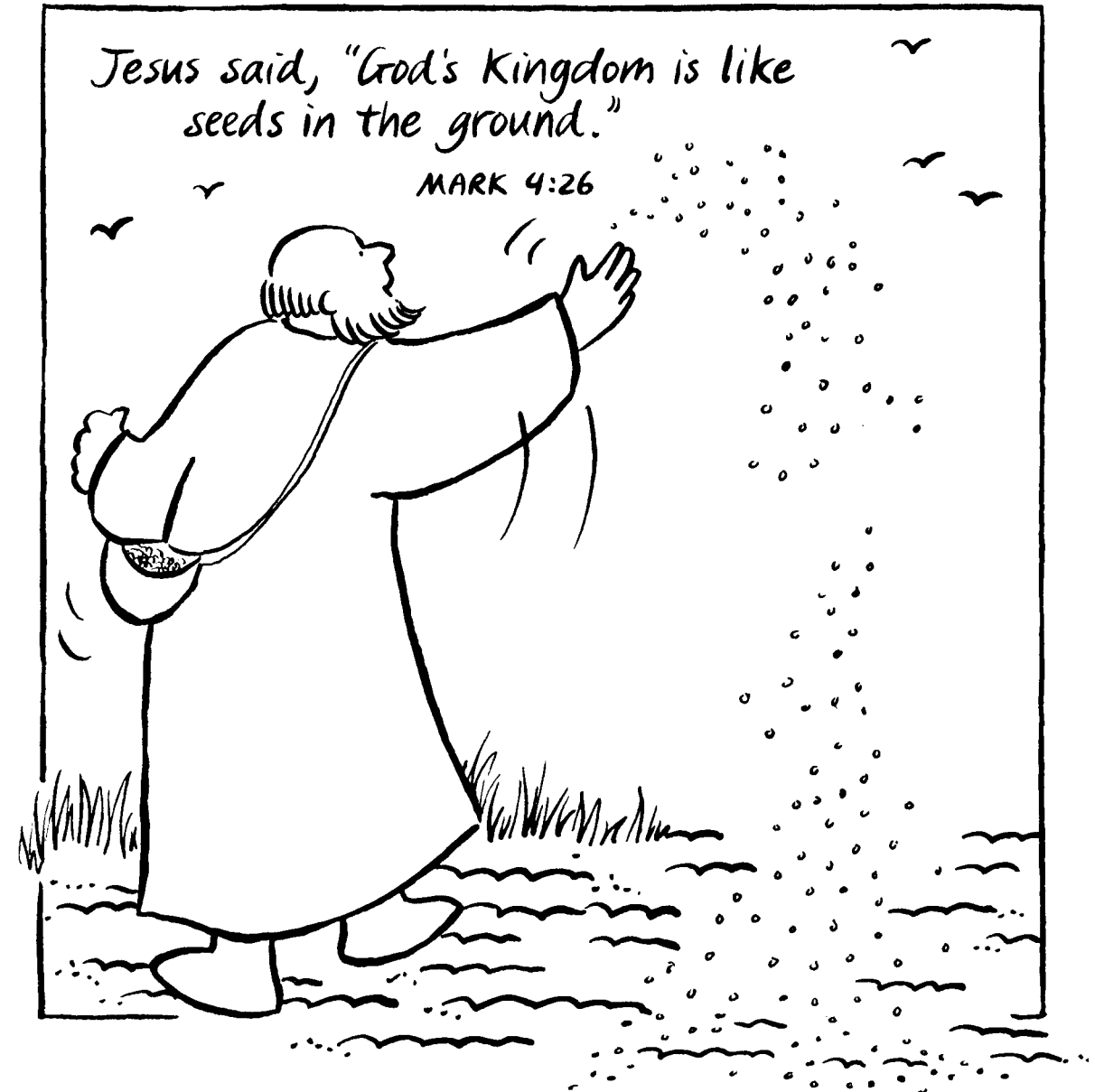
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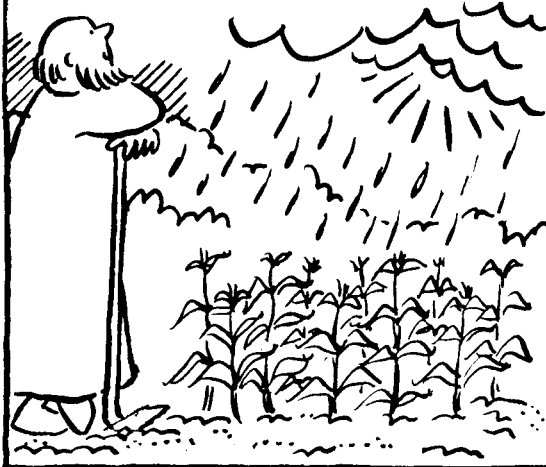
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Year B
PROPER 6
TRACKS 1 and 2



JESUS TOLD THIS STORY:

God's Kingdom is like tiny seeds. The farmer watches them grow...



... and when the crop is full grown, there is a harvest.



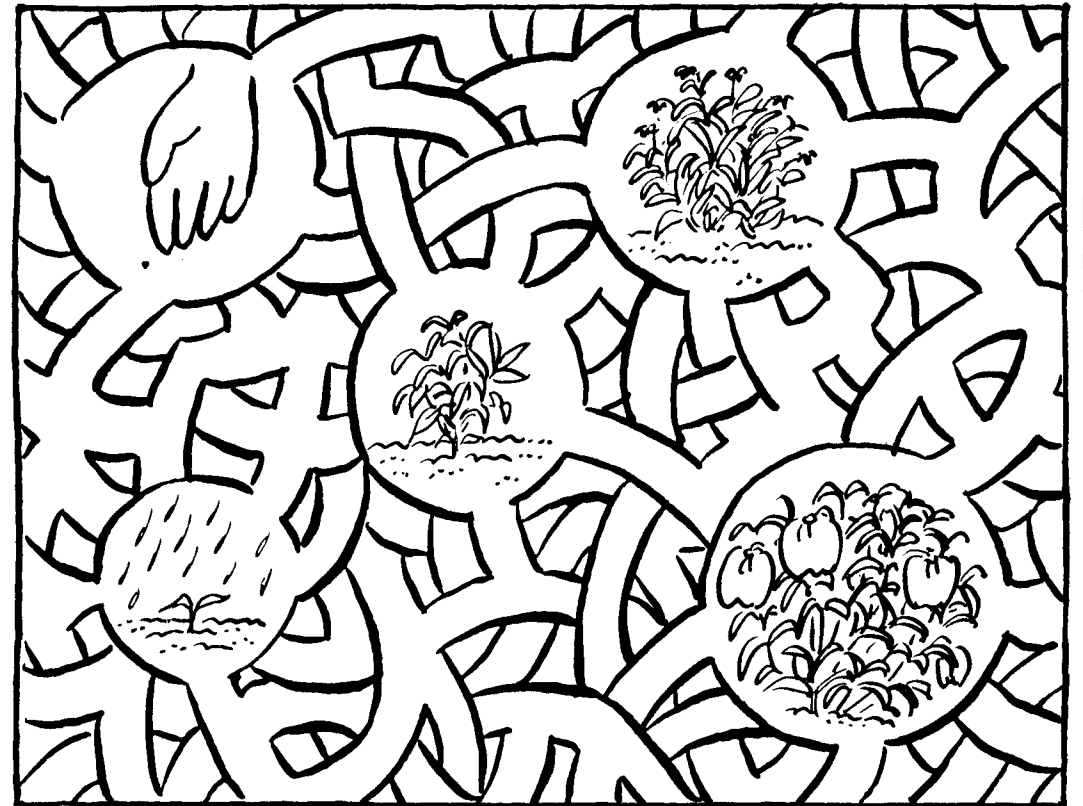
God's Kingdom is like the tiniest seed of all, the mustard seed...



...which grows into a very big plant!



Jesus often said that God's Kingdom was like seeds. Seeds are very small. They do not look as if they are alive. But if someone plants them and takes care of them, they will grow into something big and wonderful. Jesus said that God's Kingdom grows like a seed.



Find a path through the design, to show how the seed grows bigger and bigger, and produces a crop!

THE SUNDAY PAPER

Year B
PROPER
6
TRACK
2

Jesus came to show us what God is like, and to bring us back to God. When he was born for us and died for us, he showed us that God has not forgotten us or turned away from us, even though we disobeyed him. And when he rose again, he gave us his new life. Our Church year from Advent to Pentecost helps us remember and celebrate Jesus's coming, his death, and his new life.

Then, in the season after Pentecost, we remember the things Jesus said and did before he died. He showed what God is like by healing and helping people, and by telling stories, called PARABLES.

GOD'S KINGDOM GROWS

Mark 4: 26-34

JESUS EXPLAINED ABOUT GOD'S KINGDOM BY TELLING STORIES, CALLED PARABLES!

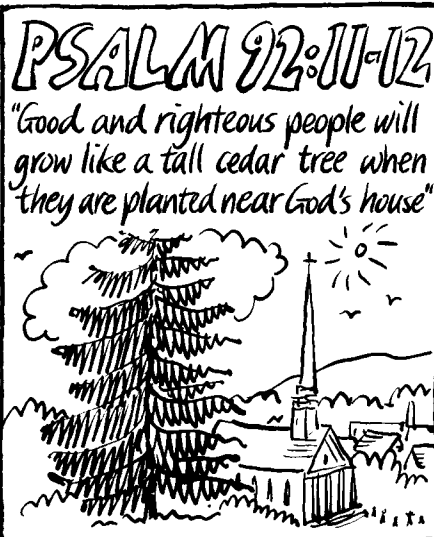


OR HERE'S ANOTHER WAY TO THINK OF GOD'S KINGDOM!



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The Bible says that God's love makes all good things grow!



A NOTE TO PARENTS

Jesus said to the disciples in the boat, "Why are you afraid? Don't you trust God?"
Mark 4:40

The disciples' fear was of two kinds. One was the natural fear of wind and waves, the fear for the boat, out of control in the tossing water, the fear of lightning, of drowning, of death. The other fear was, quite literally, *holy terror*—the fear that gripped them when they saw what Jesus could do. "*What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the waves obey him?*" It is the same fear that would strike them on the mount of transfiguration ... the fear that had driven Peter to his knees in a boat, crying out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinner!" (Luke 5:8) ... the fear that would send the women running in panic from the empty tomb.

God's absence is terrifying; God's presence can be terrifying too. When God seems far away—when Jesus is asleep (how dare he be asleep!)—we are afraid. We feel small and alone in a big and scary universe that seems totally out of control. But when God is most manifestly near—at those rare moments when the Life of the Holy One tingles through our veins, when a mighty deed is done in our own lives—then we are afraid, too. It is too much for us. We feel we will explode, or evaporate; we want to cry out, or fall on our faces, or run away. "Depart from me, for I am a sinner!"

But Jesus says, "Why are you afraid?" Jesus says that the Holy One is our Father and our Friend. And, in Gethsemane, the Son of God tasted the bitter taste of our fear. For him, too, God seemed far away, even asleep, as the terror closed in on him.

God did not still the storm for Jesus in Gethsemane; nor does he still all the storms in our lives. But when we take Jesus at his word, the unbearable begins to become bearable. The sheer, unknowable holiness of God becomes the loving embrace of One whose name we know, and who loves and accepts us. And in the big, wild, scary world, he is at our side, and he knows how we feel. It is because we have learned to trust Jesus, that we can trust God.

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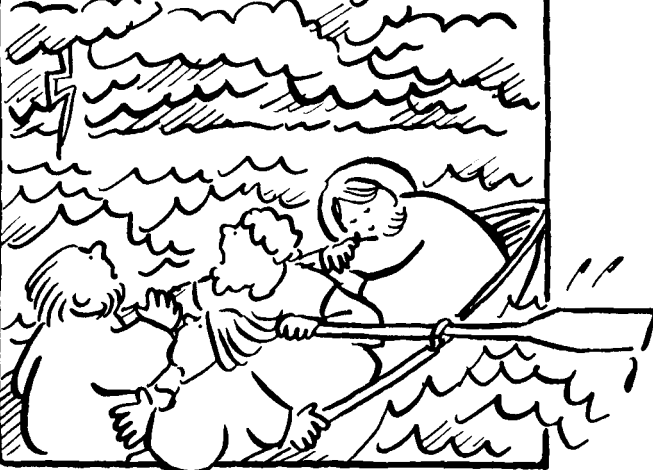
Year B
PROPER 7
TRACKS 1 and 2



It was evening. Jesus and his friends were tired. They got a boat, to row home.



As they rowed, Jesus fell asleep. The wind rose, and a storm began.



Jesus's friends were scared! They woke him up, shouting, "Don't you care if we all drown?"



Jesus told the wind and waves to be still. He said to his friends, "Why didn't you trust God?"



When Jesus stopped the storm, his friends were amazed. They said, "Who is he?! Even the wind and water obey him!" They began to understand that Jesus was more than just a good and special person. He was God.

What manner of man
is this
that even the wind
and the waves
obey him?

MARK 4:41

Decorate this verse with sun, moon, stars, wind, clouds, waves, and a picture of Jesus.

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Year B
PROPER
7
TRACK
2

Jesus showed us what God is like in everything he said and did. He did this most of all in the way he died for us, but he also did it in the things he said and did before he was arrested and killed. Many of the things Jesus said are stories that show what God is like. We call them PARABLES. Many of the things Jesus did are wonderful, amazing acts that showed God's power and love. We call them MIRACLES.

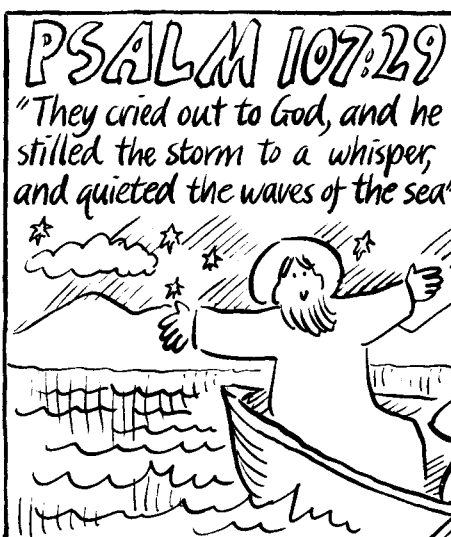
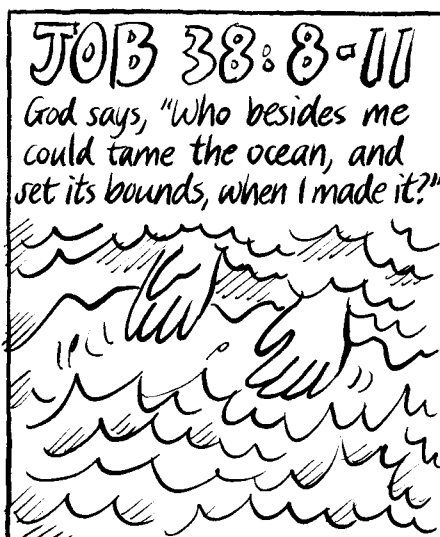
JESUS AND THE STORM

Mark 4:35-41

JESUS HAD BEEN TALKING TO A CROWD ALL DAY. NOW IT WAS EVENING!



Jesus's friends did not start out knowing that Jesus was the Son of God. At first, they just knew he was a special person who was teaching them wonderful things about God's love. But slowly they began to realize that he didn't just know about God. He was God, come to be with us!



A NOTE TO PARENTS

Few stories in the Gospels carry more emotional impact than this story of Jairus' daughter. As a parent, I find it goes right to that place in me that is the most emotionally vulnerable. Try reading the story with your children in its original setting, Mark 5:21-43. You will notice that the story of Jairus' daughter is interrupted, by the episode of the woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years and crept up to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. In his rush to the house of an important local leader, when every minute might mean life or death for a beloved only child, Jesus allows himself to be detained by an outcast, untouchable woman, seeking relief from a chronic ailment. In contrast to the desperate case of Jairus' daughter, there is little about the woman's situation that would tug at the heartstrings of the onlookers. Jesus need not even have stopped; the woman was healed, whether he took note of it or not. But he honors her: he insists on hearing her story, and testifying to her faith.

And the worst happens. "The little girl is dead; why trouble the rabbi any further?" The delay to attend to this marginal woman has cost the life of a precious child, full of promise ... Think how you would feel if your child were critically ill: suppose the time taken to respond to some non-emergency, such as this woman, delayed medical attention to your child till it was too late?

Jesus, however, insists, "She is not dead, but sleeping," though they laugh in his face. In his mercy, there is time for the dead as well as the living, the marginal as well as the socially prominent and acceptable. Time given to one is not taken away from another; all times are in his hand. No wonder they were amazed!

And what about us? What if we have suffered loss or grief to which Jesus did not respond with such amazing grace? Perhaps after all we are more like the desperate woman who bled, uncomforted, for twelve years before she was healed. And Jesus attributed that healing to her *faith*. As on the stormy lake, his message is (often in the teeth of the evidence), "Do not be afraid, trust in God."

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Year B
PROPER 8
TRACKS 1 and 2



Jairus knelt down to Jesus. He was crying. He said, "My daughter is about to die!"



Jesus hurried to Jairus's house. But someone ran up, and said that the little girl had just died.



At Jairus's house, everyone was crying. But Jesus went in, with the girl's parents.



Jesus said, "She is only asleep. Little girl, get up!" And the little girl got out of bed! She was well!



When Jesus said the little girl was only asleep, people laughed at him. They knew she was dead. But Jesus's power and love were stronger than death. He could bring the little girl back to life. He could fill her parents with joy.

Only God, and Jesus the Son of God, can bring a dead person back to life. But everybody can do something to help someone who is sad.



Make up a story about each of these pictures. Why is each child sad? What can someone do to help?

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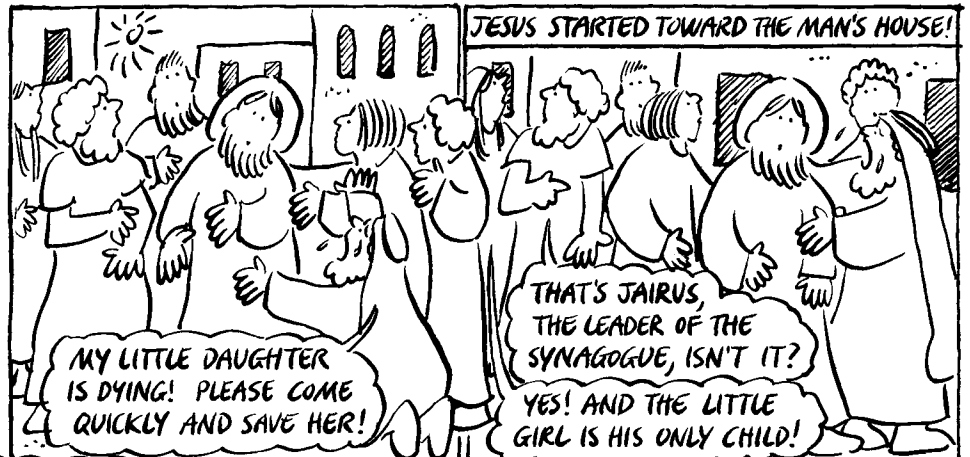
Year B
PROPER
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Most of the MIRACLES that Jesus did were healings.
He showed God's power and love by giving health to the sick!

JAIRUS'S DAUGHTER

Mark 5:21-43

ONE DAY, A MAN CAME RUNNING UP TO JESUS. THIS MAN WAS AN IMPORTANT LEADER IN THE SYNAGOGUE!



MY LITTLE DAUGHTER IS DYING! PLEASE COME QUICKLY AND SAVE HER!

THAT'S JAIRUS, THE LEADER OF THE SYNAGOGUE, ISN'T IT?

YES! AND THE LITTLE GIRL IS HIS ONLY CHILD!



People followed Jesus everywhere he went, asking him to heal them or to come and heal someone they loved. Mark, who tells us the story of Jairus's daughter, says that Jesus was delayed on his way to Jairus's house, because a woman who had been sick for twelve years reached out to touch him so that she could get better. She did get better!

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