

# Year C - Third Sunday of Lent

## Luke 13:6-9

*I will fertilize it to make it grow.*



Jesus then told them this story:

A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. One day he went out to pick some figs, but he didn't find any. So he said to the gardener, "For three years I have come looking for figs on this tree, and I haven't found any yet. Chop it down! Why should it take up space?"

The gardener answered, "Master, leave it for another year. I'll dig around it and put some manure on it to make it grow. Maybe it will have figs on it next year. If it doesn't, you can have it cut down."



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*With God's help we can grow!*



### Message

- Begin by asking the children what their favourite fruit is?
- Once they've shared their ideas, ask them where these different types of fruit come from?
- Ask the children if all trees grow fruit (no, not all trees are fruit trees).
- So, if a farmer planted a fruit tree, it means that he or she would expect the tree to bear fruit!
- Ask the children what the farmer would have to do to care for the tree so that it can bear fruit
- Explain that the Gospel reading today has another fruit tree in it - a fig tree (figs are less common in Australia than in the Holy land, so you may need to describe it or find an image to show the children).
- If we read closely, we can see that the man has been coming to the tree to look for fruit for three seasons, that means about three years! But in all that time there has been no fruit.
- Ask the children why they think the tree is not bearing fruit (maybe it has a sickness, maybe it's not in the correct soil, maybe it hasn't had enough light or water?).
- In the story, one man wants to cut it down but the other wants to give it another chance... ask the children what they would choose.
- We are a bit like that fig tree.
- God has 'planted' us in the world to 'bear fruit' - to make the world a wonderful place.
- But we need some things to help us grow. For example: to know God loves us, to be loved by our family, to learn about God's ways and practice them, to make choices that put others first.
- Sometimes we aren't very loving or kind - we don't bear good 'fruit' - but God is always merciful. When we ask for his help, he is always there to help us grow, and to try again.

### Discussion questions

- Lent is a time to practice things that help us grow (prayer, fasting, alms-giving)
- What things have you been doing?
- How are you growing this Lent?

