

Pumpkin Patch

God's Grace to Us

Today's Reading: Colossians 1:3-14

All over the world this Gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. Colossians 1:6

Faith Walk

Explore a pumpkin patch. Check out the soil, the vines, and the leaves. Look for pumpkins of different sizes. See how many stages of growth you can find.

Faith Talk

- ✧ From one pumpkin seed grows a vine that produces a number of pumpkins.
- ✧ The pumpkin vine spreads through the pumpkin patch.
- ✧ The seed of God's Word, the Gospel, bears the fruit of believers.
- ✧ The Christian church has spread through the world, producing believers on every continent.
- ✧ We can help to grow the fruit of believers by sharing the Gospel with everyone we meet.

Follow-up Activities

- ✦ Carve a cross in a pumpkin and set it on your front steps or in a window as a symbol to those who pass by.
- ✦ Place a candle inside the pumpkin and recall that Christ calls us to be a light of His Gospel.
- ✦ Clean and dry pumpkin seeds. After they have dried, brush them with oil,

sprinkle them with salt, and toast them in the oven at 325° for 10 minutes. Remember that the seed of faith begins with God's Word.

- ✦ Have a pumpkin party. Serve toasted pumpkin seeds, pumpkin pie, and hot apple cider. Make a poster board pumpkin and play "Pin the Nose on the Jack-o-Lantern." Use paints to decorate pumpkins with Christian symbols. Make pictures by gluing a design of pumpkin seeds onto heavy paper and coloring the design with markers.
- ✦ To explore other Christian teachings that can be learned through the example of a pumpkin, read *The Pumpkin Patch Parable* by Liz Curtis Higgs (Thomas Nelson Inc., 1995).

Our Response to God's Grace

Dear Jesus, our True Vine,

You are the Vine; we are the branches. It is the Gospel of Your love for us that bears fruit. Help us, like the pumpkin plant, to spread Your Gospel through the world. In Your name. Amen.

Ponderings

- ☞ The pumpkin vine wanders. The dandelion seeds blow. The bee busily flits from flower to flower, spreading pollen. The apple tree spreads its branches until it sags under the weight of apples. The raspberry bush sends shoots to other parts of the yard. Growth. Without the wind to blow the seeds, the sun to shine, the rain to fall, and the nourishing nutrients of the soil, growth would not occur and soon the plants would die. What can we learn from plants about spiritual growth and the spread of the Gospel?
- ☞ Jesus says, "I am the true vine." Read His words about growth and the spread of the Gospel in John 15:1-17. How can Christ use us? What is our role in the growth of the church?
- ☞ Reread Paul's words in Colossians 1:6: "This Gospel is bearing fruit and growing." Spend time praying and meditating on this passage. What does Paul mean by the Gospel bearing fruit?

- ☞ What role has God called you to play in the spreading of His Word? Pray and meditate on this question. Spend time listening for God's answer. As you earnestly seek the answer to this question, consider your gifts and talents, your time and energy, your skills, resources, and training, and the ministry areas that touch your spirit.
- ☞ Whether or not you feel a strong calling to an area of ministry, God desires that you bear fruit. Pray for God's wisdom, guidance, and empowerment as you seek to do His will and spread His Gospel.

Journal Jottings