



preparing

Perhaps you've heard the phrase, "Bloom where you are planted!" It's a phrase that's intended to give us encouragement. And, maybe on our worst days, we hear it as chastisement, "C'mon!! Bloooooom!!!" But I wonder what happens when we flip that phrase around a bit, imagining ourselves planted firmly in soil that is rich, where we are tended and loved. A place where we are rooted and so cared for that we ... begin ... to bloom! As you 'consider the lilies', may you be reminded of how the Father who created you, knows you, loves you, and is tending to you as you wait for places where you long to see blossoms bloom.

settling and listening

You might want to have this conversation while at home or in the car or any time that you hear that still small voice cheering you on.

If at home and if you make it a practice at home to set aside a special time and place, consider laying out a cloth and lighting a candle as you say

LEADER: Come, let us draw near to God.

PEOPLE: And God will draw near to us.

Prayer leader can pray. ***"Come, Holy Spirit. As we make space for you, open our ears to hear. Open our mind to understand. Stir our heart. Help us to know and love you more. Amen."***

[pause]

If the nudge to speak comes at a time when you are out and about, just go for it!

“I wonder what you know about flowers? How do they grow? When do they grow? What is it like to wait for flowers to bloom? How long do the flowers last? I wonder why God created flowers to be so beautiful?” Wait to listen and gather their thoughts.

“When Jesus was on earth – when he came to be with us to show us what God and his kingdom are like – he did a lot of teaching to help people understand. Sometimes he taught in parables. Does anyone remember what a parable is?” A parable can be very basically defined as ‘a simple story that teaches a lesson’. ***“Today we are going to read a parable that Jesus shared with his friends to help them – to help us – understand what God’s kingdom was like. As we read today, I wonder what you’ll come to know about Jesus and all that the kingdom of God offers to us in love?”***

“I invite you to draw what you are hearing and what God is stirring in you on pages 6-7 of your journal as we read from the gospel of Luke.”

Invite a kid or grownup to read Luke 12:27-31.

A reading from Luke 12:27-31.

27 “Think about how the wild flowers grow. They don’t work or make clothing. But here is what I tell you. Not even Solomon in his royal robes was dressed like one of those flowers. 28 If that is how God dresses the wild grass, how much better will he dress you! After all, the grass is here only today. Tomorrow it is thrown into the fire. Your faith is so small! 29 Don’t spend time thinking about what you will eat or drink. Don’t worry about it. 30 People who are ungodly run after all those things. Your Father knows that you need them. 31 But put God’s kingdom first. Then those other things will also be given to you.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

“I wonder what these words make you think about God?”

“I wonder why Jesus used flowers to help us understand God’s care for us?”

“I wonder how God cares for you?”

Pause to share responses.

“Now I want to share with you a reading from the Old Testament. It’s from the book called Song of Songs. Some refer to it as Song of Solomon. It’s actually written in the form of poetry as a conversation between two people who love each other. And it has many references to beauty in a garden. I wonder what that makes you think about?”

Invite a kid or grownup to read from Song of Songs 2:11-12.

A reading from Song of Songs 2:11-12.

11 Look! The winter is past.

The rains are over and gone.

12 Flowers are appearing on the earth.

The season for singing has come.

The cooing of doves

is heard in our land.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

“I wonder what you notice from this passage?”

“I wonder what makes you curious? Or question? Or confident?”

“I wonder about how flowers are always blooming everywhere on earth? What might that tell you about our loving Father?”

Pause to share responses.

Summarize with this: ***God, the creator of the whole world and everything in it – including YOU! – loves to give good gifts. He loves to give you his kingdom. He loves to give you his love and care. If God the Father, who calls you his child, gives you everything you need, what is to stop you from trusting him?***

praying

Seal your time and conversation by giving thanks to God by saying together the Lord’s Prayer or singing the Doxology.