

The Kingdom of Heaven is...Jesus is explaining us, what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Jesus taught constantly about “the kingdom of God”. This concept was at the centre of his teaching and life. It should also form a central place in our own Catholic faith.

Admittedly, the term “kingdom of God” is somewhat complex: it spans the Old and New Testaments, and it refers to several things at once. But at its core, the kingdom is fundamentally about **salvation**.

In a word, the kingdom of God is the manifestation and the realization of God’s plan of salvation in all its fullness. (Redemptoris Missio, #15) Encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II 1990.

The good news of the kingdom of God was the starting point and the centre of our Lord’s whole public life. He was sent to announce this kingdom, to induce men by means of his miracles to believe in his gospel, and to unite all the faithful in this new kingdom.

To have a Kingdom you need a King... The “Kingdom of Heaven” is when God reigns as king in our world, in our lives and in our hearts.

From the very beginning of our story (Gen 1/2) to the very end (Rev 21) we have images of God dwelling amongst His people, here. We pray in the Lord’s Prayer “your Kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven” the

Kingdom of Heaven is when the two become one, and when God is King.

- Why is this kingdom so important?

Christ's Kingdom is life as God created it to be lived:

Life full of meaning, purpose, wisdom, and lasting happiness; Life to the full, which we can only have through friendship with Christ, the one Saviour, through knowing, loving, and following him more each day.

St Paul understood this. He defined Christ's Kingdom like this: **"The kingdom of God [is] righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"** (Romans 14:17).

That's the goal of Christ's Kingdom: experiencing life to the full, experiencing righteousness, peace, and joy by letting God's grace rule our thoughts and actions.

It's a Kingdom that begins here on earth, in the Church, and will last through all eternity.

But how do we get there? How do we let Christ build up his Kingdom in our lives, our family's lives, and in our communities?

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches us three key characteristics of his Kingdom.

1. ***First, the Kingdom is always growing.*** Christ's Kingdom starts small, like a mustard seed, like a little bit of yeast in a huge batch of flour - but it's alive, and so it is always growing. Christ's Kingdom is always alive, dynamic, always growing. And so, if

we ever find ourselves bored with our Christian faith, it's simply because we have wandered away from Jesus.

2. ***The second characteristic of Christ's Kingdom is that it will always have to face opposition and contradiction.*** The weeds and the wheat grow up together, side by side. Wherever there are saints, there are sinners to make them suffer. Wherever there are missionaries, there are always martyrs. Etc., etc.....
3. ***The third characteristic of Christ's Kingdom is that its impact will always be out of proportion to its size.*** A little leaven makes the whole loaf rise. The impact of saying yes to Christ can never be exaggerated. One act of forgiveness of mercy can put an end to decades of bitterness, hatred, and resentment. One young man saying yes to God's call to the priesthood... Mother Teresa of Calcutta...

The Kingdom of Heaven is the salvation that I am aspiring to bring to life now. It is the salvation in which there is peace and respect for the other and the commandment of "Love one another as I have loved you" is genuinely lived.

It is that salvation in which there still may be struggles and hardship, but there is love and concern for those who fall behind.

The Kingdom of Heaven is where we all have to do our bit to bring to our lives now.

- What can you do to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to our community today?

Let's welcome the kingdom of heaven in our lives which is always growing, facing opposition and out of proportion to its size, so that we may act as true followers of our king.

In our day, the kingdom of heaven is...about salvation; it is the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation and to let Jesus be our king.