

THE SUNDAY PAPER

JUNIOR



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TRACKS 1 and 2

A NOTE TO PARENTS

We are God's servants; it is our job to do his work. All Saints' Day is approaching; this is a good time to think about what we mean by a holy life, a life spent doing God's work.

The Church has had many models for the holy life, influenced by the different times and cultures in which the Church has lived. Stories of "lives of the saints" for children give a distorted view of sainthood if they are limited to persons with "St." in their names, for the early Church bestowed that title very freely (especially to those who had died spectacularly for their faith), and then began to tighten up its process of *canonization*, or the official recognition that a deceased person may be called "holy" and invoked in prayer. In the Middle Ages, the title was usually given to clergy, monks, and virgins, with a strong emphasis on penance and self-denial, and a strong aversion to sex and marriage. Since the Reformation, only the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches have continued formal canonizations, so the list of "Saints" since the 1500s reflects the spirituality and priorities of those bodies. Other churches have recently enlarged their yearly calendar of saints' days to include more modern people. The Episcopal one, in the front of the 1979 Prayer Book, restricts its post-Reformation membership to Anglicans, and is very "churchy." Other church bodies have chosen a broader base, and Episcopal General Conventions since 1979 have now recognized a large number of less churchy names.

What can you tell your children about the three servants of God on the back of this page? One reaches out in love to the poor and helpless; one, an ordained preacher, gave his life to the work of changing our hearts and our society so that the poor and helpless might be empowered. The work of the third is different: writing books to open the minds and hearts of adults and children to the Gospel. "Helping people" is what we think of first, today, when we think of God's work, but there are many different ways to do it. Not all of us are called to "save the world" by working with the poor, or changing the system—or preaching the Gospel. These are only three of the many ways to do God's work.

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Jesus said, "Faith in God is like a seed.
Even if it starts out very small,
it can grow and grow."

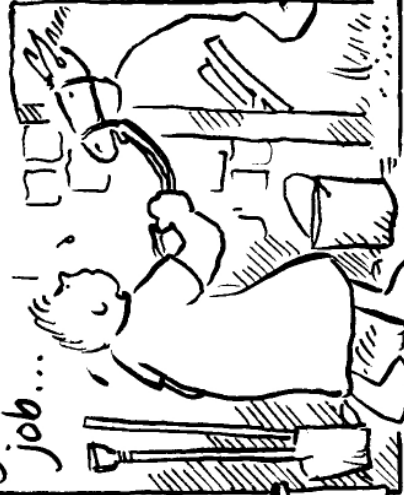
LUKE 17:6



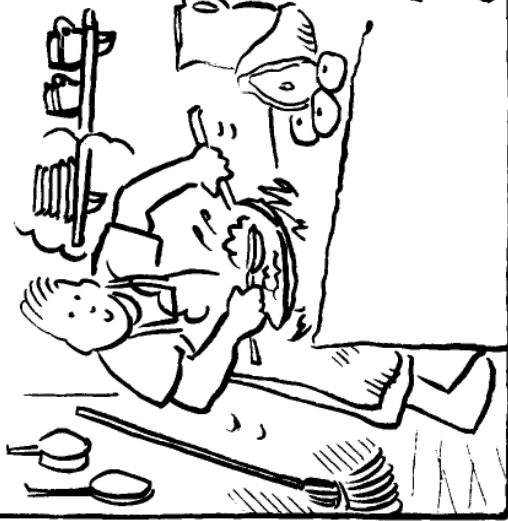
Jesus's friends said to him, "Help our faith grow. Teach us how to love God more and more."



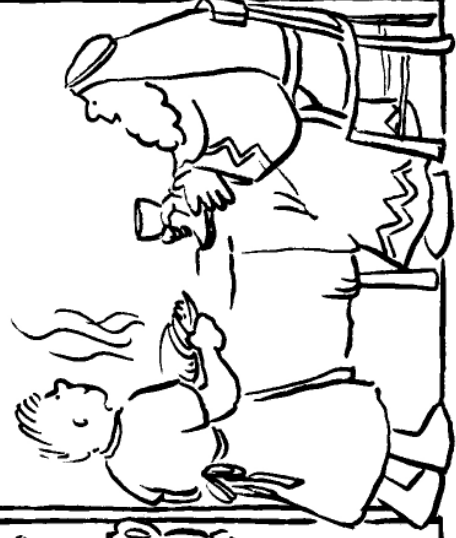
Jesus said, "You are God's servants. He wants you to do his work. A good servant does one job..."



"... and then starts right in on the next one."

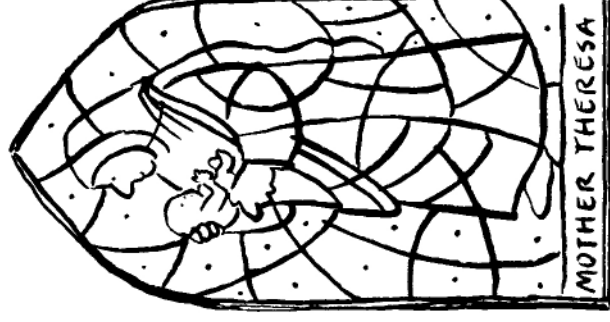


"A good servant is proud and happy to do the master's work."



Jesus said a good servant doesn't expect the master to keep saying, "Thank you," or "Hooray for you!" Just doing the work well makes the servant happy.

When we do God's work of spreading his love and caring for his world, that makes us happy. The more we do God's work, the more we love him and want to be his helpers. Like the seed, our faith is growing big and strong.



Color in the spaces where there are dots, to find the servants of God in these stained glass windows.