



The Quiet Garden and the Smile Seeds



FIRST WITNESSES

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At the edge of Maya's village sat a garden most people walked past without noticing. It wasn't hidden, but it was quiet—so quiet that busy feet and loud voices never stopped there. One afternoon, Maya noticed a small wooden sign by the gate: "The Quiet Garden: Enter with a Gentle Heart."

Curious, she stepped inside and met an old gardener kneeling in the soil. He smiled and handed her a tiny paper packet. On it were the words *Smile Seeds*.

"These seeds grow in a special way," he said. "They only sprout when someone prays with love."

That evening, Maya knelt by the garden bed and whispered, "God, please help my friend Jonah, who has been sad." The next morning, a small blue flower peeked out of the ground. Surprised and delighted, Maya prayed again, for patience with her little brother, and soon a purple vine curled upward.

Each day she returned, praying quietly. When she prayed for peace, soft white

blossoms appeared. When she prayed for kindness, tiny golden buds opened. The gardener explained, "Jesus taught that those who are gentle, merciful, and peacemakers are blessed. Prayer helps those blessings grow."

Word spread and soon neighbors began visiting the garden. A tired mother prayed for strength. A lonely child prayed for a friend. The garden filled with color and joy, not because life was suddenly perfect, but because hearts were changing.

One afternoon, Maya noticed a girl standing outside the gate, afraid to enter. Maya walked over, placed a packet of *Smile Seeds* in her hand, and said, "You can pray too." Together they whispered a prayer, and the brightest yellow flower bloomed.

Maya learned that prayer doesn't make troubles disappear. Instead, it plants goodness deep in the heart, and from that goodness, joy quietly grows.

Growing in Prayer with Jesus Series; Inspired by Matthew 5:1-12 / The Beatitudes.



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