

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Scripture

Reflection by Father Dave

(Ezekiel 17: 22 – 24; 2 Corinthians 5: 6 – 10; Mark 4: 26 – 34)

Most of us have planted a seed in the ground at one time or another. Our task is to bury the seed and water it. The soil, along with God, produces the growth. We don't think much of the scientific explanation of what takes place in the ground. We just know that the seed should grow. This is the image Jesus uses in today's Gospel to describe the kingdom of God.

In our first Scripture Reading from the prophet Ezekiel, we see someone with whom we can relate at times of discouragement. Ezekiel lived at one of the most disastrous periods of Israel's history, when its people had been hauled off into exile far away from their homeland and many were feeling that God had abandoned them. Ezekiel assures them that this is not so. On the contrary, the Lord has a plan for His people, Ezekiel says. God will lift them up, like taking a tiny twig from a branch, and transplant them so that they will grow into a vast tree. That magnificent tree, though Ezekiel could not have known it, stands ultimately as a symbol of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus' parable in the Gospel tells a similar story. He speaks of a tiny mustard seed, which grows so huge that it provides a resting place for all the birds of the air. And Jesus tells us that the Kingdom of God is like that. Despite its tiny beginnings – from one virtually unknown young man Who died by crucifixion – it had not only survived over two thousand years of history but still holds in its embrace millions of people throughout the world. And we are reminded that nothing can thwart God's plans.

To live in the Kingdom requires that we act on our faith. Faith without good works is simply not enough. Jesus shows us good works throughout the Gospel. He heals the sick, cures the leper, casts out evil spirits, feeds the hungry – all while sharing the Good News of the Gospel. What is it that we do to act out our Faith in the Kingdom of God? Parents nurse sick children. Friends forgive and reconcile. We sacrifice some of our income, time and talent for those around us in need. We teach, cook, clean and care for others. In our workplaces or in our schools, we show respect and love for each person. And the list can go on and on.

The point is that the Kingdom is here and the Kingdom is now. All that we do in our day-to-day living should consciously reflect to the world that we are God's people; that we are united in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. And these are also ways that we share encouragement and hope to others who may be feeling down and out.

If our actions are centered around Jesus, then we are indeed a kingdom people.

Reflection by Father Rody

June 13, 2021 + 11TH Sun Ord Time YR-B

Mark 4, 26-34

26 He said, "This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land

27 and would sleep and rise night and day and the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how.

28 Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

29 And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come."

1=V.26

-one of the literary styles of our Lord Jesus Christ in conveying His message is to use parable...the Kingdom of God is presented to us through the parable of the seeds (mustard seeds).

2=V.26 *'it is as if a man were to scatter seed...'* and V.27 *'and would sleep and rise night and day...'*

-*'IT IS AS IF'* this is a qualifying term that would answer the question 'Who is really in charge in the propagation of the Kingdom of God...Who could have initiated such act?'

- V.26 *'it is as if a man were to scatter seed'* is a conditional clause stating a supposition of an imaginary thing and this is verified by V.27 'and would sleep and rise night and day' Did man do it?

-thus, as to the two questions, the answer is God is in charge and God initiated it.

-If we suppose man did it, then how would man answer the question-How did it grow? V.27 says, 'he knows not how.'

3=V.28 of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

-even with the use of analogy on the things we see so ordinary in a daily basis, God never stops amazing us...ordinary thing has become so extraordinary in the process that an individual should always appreciate.

4=V.29 And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come."

-verse 26-27 described man in a passive state, but verse 29 eventually says otherwise...man is in active state as far as the Kingdom of God is concerned...*man is in active participation 'he wields the sickle at once'*

In the end what do we get...God always thinks what is best for us and He would put into action His thoughts...in the process, God is telling us 'Hey mankind I guess a piece of the puzzle (My grand design for your well-being) is missing...*your active participation...pleasee.'*