

## **Homily - Mark 4: 26-34**

### **11<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B**

13 June, 2021 - Sooeey

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A man walked into a store. To his great surprise he found Christ behind the counter. He asked, “What do you sell here?” Christ replied, “You name it.” And the man said: “I want food for all, good health for kids, and adequate housing for everyone.” Gently Jesus answered, “Friend, I do not sell finished products here, only seeds. You must plant them and water them. I will do the rest.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus compares the growth of the Kingdom of God to the germination of a wheat seed and that of a tiny mustard seed. Both have exceedingly small beginnings. The wheat seeds, by gradual but steady growth, help the farmer to get a bumper crop. In the same way, the life principle in a tiny mustard seed enables it to grow into a large bush.

Well, the reign of God in human hearts and the growth of the Church in the world also have small beginnings. But the Source of all life, God the Holy Spirit, gives to both a steady, persistent, and enormous growth, provided we, the members of the Church, cooperate with God’s grace.

Now, the Kingdom of God is the growth of God's rule in human hearts that occurs when man does the will of God and surrenders his life to God. The seed of Faith lies dormant within each of us. When we permit Him to nurture it with tender loving care, it grows miraculously to gigantic proportions. The growth is slow and microscopic in the beginning. But this seed grows by using the power of the Holy Spirit, given to us through the Word of God, the Mass, the Sacraments, and prayer. And, God's rule in the human heart transforms individuals and communities into God's people doing His will in His kingdom.

Once, a number of men were returning from a conference and were rushing by taxi to catch a train. As they arrived at the railway station, the train was ready to move off. They rushed across the platform and began to board the train. In their hurry, however, one of the men accidentally brushed against a table on the platform and scattered some of the apples that the seller had packed neatly in a pyramid. Without any further thought he called out to his friends to go on ahead, and that he would catch the next train. He returned to the table and the apples to find that the person in charge was a twelve-year-old boy, and that he was blind. The man gathered the scattered apples, put aside some that were

slightly damaged, and stacked the others neatly, just as they had been before being scattered. When the job was finished the man took some money from his pocket, put it in the boy's hand, and said, "That will cover for the apples that are damaged. I'm sorry for what happened, and I hope I haven't spoiled your day." He squeezed the boy's hand in a reassuring way and turned to walk away. As he did so, the boy turned in his direction, and asked simply, "Excuse me, sir, but.... eh.... Are you Jesus?" — That man was a living sign of the kingdom, Jesus is speaking about. He was not just a nominal Christian, but a typical disciple of Jesus in whose heart the Kingdom of God, like a mustard seed sown already by the Lord has been fruitful.

Well, if we want to change something in our own lives or in the world around us, we must make a start somewhere. That start will necessarily be very small, and may appear to be totally insignificant and useless in the circumstances. But we must go forward even though we do not know where it will lead us. We must persevere in spite of delays and obstacles. We must trust in God.

A story is told of Pope John XXIII. Beset by a host of problems, he could not sleep at night. One night, he had an inspiration in the form of a dream: "John", a voice

said, “Don’t take yourself too seriously. You must remember that I am still the head of the Church, not you”. After that, his insomnia disappeared.

Dear friends, let us realize that we are only God’s collaborators in His work of sowing, planting, watering and weeding in His vineyard. For God’s Kingdom to come – a Kingdom of justice, love, and peace – each of us has a part to play, but it is God who gives the increase.

As Pope Francis would say: “God’s Kingdom requires our cooperation, but it is above all the initiative and gift of the Lord. Yes, it is always God who makes His Kingdom grow. And so let our prayer this day be: “Thy Kingdom come.”

God bless you all, **Amen.**