



SAINT PATRICK'S COLLEGE

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Penitential Act

**Reader: The Lord is rich in mercy and kindness.
Let us prepare ourselves to hear God's Word
and praise the Lord Jesus Christ.**

All pause for silent prayer.

Lord Jesus, you gather all nations in peace: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you come in word and sacrament: Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you show us the way to God's kingdom: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Reader: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Opening Prayer

Reader: Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

(Invite those present to consider the gifts in their life, and the people who need their gifts at this time)

Lord Jesus, grant us the courage and strength to work towards building your kingdom on earth.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Reader: Let us listen to God's Word.

First Reading

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

I have made the small tree great.

The Lord says this:

**'From the top of the cedar,
from the highest branch I will take a shoot
and plant it myself on a very high mountain.
I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel.
It will sprout branches and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.**

**Every kind of bird will live beneath it,
every winged creature rest in the shade of its branches.
And every tree of the field will learn that I, the Lord, am the one
who stunts tall trees and makes the low ones grow,
who withers green trees and makes the withered green.
I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it.'**

The word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

(One suggestion is that those present each read out one verse)

Response: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord to make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your truth in the watches of the night.

ALL: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

The just will flourish like the palm-tree and grow like a Lebanon cedar.

ALL: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

Planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God, still bearing fruit when they are old, still full of sap, still green, to proclaim that the Lord is just. In him, my rock, there is no wrong.

ALL: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

Second Reading

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing the Lord.

We are always full of confidence when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight – we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord. Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.

The word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation

ALL: Alleluia, alleluia!

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the Sower;
all who come to him will live for ever.

Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

The mustard seed, the smallest of all the seeds, grows into the biggest shrub of all.

Jesus said to the crowds, ‘This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, he loses no time; he starts to reap because the harvest has come.’

He also said, ‘What can we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.’

Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it. He would not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples when they were alone.

The Gospel of the Lord

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

HOMILY by Fr Michael Tate

The Sowing of the Seed

In Australia, so far as I know, a farmer ploughs the land and *then* plants the seed. In Galilee, the farmer scattered the seed on the old field and therefore on tracks which people made walking across it after cropping, on thorny areas, and also on what he hoped was good soil. He *then* ploughed in the seed.

It is a wonder that anything grew, and generally the return was about 7:1. In a previous parable Jesus had spoken of the Kingdom he was inaugurating as if it would turn out to be like a bumper harvest of up to a hundredfold.

What would such a harvest mean for a peasant tilling the rocky soil of Galilee? It would mean release from the endless servitude to a landlord, generation after generation. It would mean liberation, not only from hunger, but from the power structure which was quite content with a permanent underclass of subsistence farmers.

In other words, Jesus was telling his listeners that God's Kingdom would turn the world as they knew it 'upside down'. As Mary sang in the Magnificat: 'The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away.' Power structures would be shattered by the impulses of the Gospel to create a society where there was a just distribution of the world's resources.

Naturally, the peasant farmers of Galilee wanted to know 'when' and 'how'. We want to know the 'when' and the 'how' of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus' answer to them, and to us, is basically: 'It is not for you to know. Just get on with the sowing of the Gospel seed. Something will happen with the seed you sow, something out of all proportion to your part in the process.'

Our Lord pictured this by contrasting the tiny mustard seed and the mustard bush which he even exaggerates into a tree in which birds could find shelter! In this parable Jesus says: 'Be patient, allow the creative power of God to work in the earth and the small seed will be "raised up".'

When did God's creative power work in the depths of the stony ground so that the Gospel Seed was raised up? The answer is, of course, in the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

And what effect did this have? We read in the Acts of the Apostles concerning the early Christian community that 'The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.' (Acts 2:44)

In other words, the social system was being subverted by the power of the Gospel. A more just distribution of resources was taking place in the immediate aftermath of the proclamation of the Resurrection by Peter on the Feast of Pentecost.

I think it is very telling that a little further on in the Acts of the Apostles we read: 'The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no-one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common. The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power.' (Acts 4:32-33)

There is a correlation between the commitment of Christians to a just distribution of the world's resources and the proclamation of the Lord's resurrection. Only if the commitment is authentic and real will the proclamation be powerful and effective.

So, let us lead lives with an authentic dimension of social justice, let us get on with sowing the seed of the Gospel whenever we get the opportunity, let God get on with germinating that seed with the power of the Resurrection so that the Tree of Life may grow to such a height that all peoples 'can shelter in its shade.'

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Reader: Let us together pray the words Jesus taught us

All: Our Father, who are in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL
Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

**Reader: Brothers and sisters, the kingdom of God is near, let us pray
for those in need.
That the universal Church will work faithfully to build God's
kingdom on earth.**

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader: That peace and justice will reign among the nations of the
earth.**

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader: That those who work on the land will have life-giving rain
and abundant harvests**

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader: That we who are gathered around this table will work for the
coming of God's kingdom.**

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That parents and teachers will be guided by the Holy Spirit as they teach and nurture the children in their care.

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the sick and housebound in our parish will be comforted by our practical care and concern.

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That those who have died, including (name those known here), may rejoice in the heavenly kingdom.

(pause)

In faith we pray:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: O God, how generous is your love for us. Hear the prayer of your people and help us to work unceasingly for the coming of your kingdom. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

The readings today remind us that poetic imagery is an apt way of describing the mysterious presence of God in our midst. The cedar began as a seedling that takes years to grow into a magnificent tree. The same is true of the mustard tree. It too requires time to develop its trunk and branches. The development of moral integrity in a human being is just as gradual. Rooted in God, it flourishes in God's presence, and it produces fruit even into old age. Although God is present in all things, sustaining them and allowing them to follow their natural courses, God really transcends all things. Metaphorical language may be the best means for speaking about God and the things of God. It enables us to live in the tension that both reveals something about God and conceals God's real nature.

The reign of God also begins in very ordinary circumstances, and it matures gradually until it has spread itself far and wide. Although the mystery of the reign of God unfolds within human history, we need eyes of faith to recognise it. Like the cedar and the mustard seed, it grows within the concreteness of human experience. Just as the life force that thrusts the branches of the trees further and further out cannot itself be seen, so the reign of God is mysterious, even incomprehensible. Still, it is there, inviting us, urging us to move forward, transforming our world.

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Respond in prayer to God.

Close this reflection by praying together the Glory be..

Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, in now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Closing Prayer

**Reader: Lord Jesus, guide us as we strive to build God's kingdom on earth and, when our days are one, be with us forever in the God's heavenly kingdom.
In your name we pray.**

All: Amen.

Reader: Let us all join together in the College Assembly Prayer

(ALL)

O My God

Give me your grace to live in your love always.

Keep my eyes, my ears, my heart
from clinging to the things that stop me loving.

Raise my heart in joyful praise for your gifts and
let my love of you grow more and more every day.

Amen.

Short litany

Reader: Mary, Mother of God

All: *Pray for us*

Reader: St Patrick

All: *Pray for us*

Reader: St Mary of the Cross

All: *Pray for us*

Reader: Blessed Edmund Rice

All: *Pray for us*

Reader:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.



The Pillars of St Patrick's College

Faith

Excellence

Relationships

Tradition

The touchstones of a Catholic Education in the Edmund Rice tradition

Gospel Spirituality

Inclusive Community

Liberating Education

Justice and Solidarity