

The Living Word

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

13 June 2021

First Reading Ez 17:22-24

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.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 91:2-3. 13-16. R. see v.2

(R.) Lord it is good to give thanks to you.

1. 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. (R.)

2. The just will flourish like the palm-tree
and grow like a Lebanon cedar. (R.)
3. 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. (R.)

Second Reading 2 Cor 5:6-10

*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.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

*The seed is the word of God, Christ is the
sower;*

all who come to him will live for ever.

Alleluia!



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.

Gospel Mk 4:26-34

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.

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