

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.

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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 17:5-10** — Pg. 1

**What is the Church saying Past and Present?** Pages 1-3

**What is God saying to you through this passage?** Page 4

## Gospel Reading – Luke 17:5-10 – Daily Roman Missal

The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.” The Lord replied, “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” “Who among you would say to your servant who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, ‘Come here immediately and take your place at table’? Would he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for me to eat? Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink. You may eat and drink when I am finished’? Is he grateful to that servant because he did what was commanded? So should it be with you. When you have done all you have been commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obligated to do.’”

## Spiritual Reading

From Saint Gregory the Great; Pope

The entire mass of a tree that is going to be born lies hidden within one grain of very small seed. Let us place before our eyes the marvelous size of some tree; let us ponder whence it started to grow into so great a mass: surely we shall find that its beginning was a very small seed. Let us now consider how the strength of the wood, the roughness of the bark, the amount of taste and smell, the abundance of fruits and the greenness of the leaves lie hidden in that small grain of seed. When we touch the grain of seed, it is not strong; where does the hardness of its wood come from? It is not rough: where has the roughness of the bark arisen? It has no taste: when has the taste of the fruit come from? It gives forth no odor: whence does the odor of the fruit arise? It gives no indication of being green: what does the greenness of the leaves come out of? All these things lie hidden together in the seed, but they don't all emerge at once. A root is produced from the seed, a shoot from the root, fruit from the shoot; and a seed is produced in the fruit. Let us say, then, that the seed lies hidden within the seed.[1]

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Link to Liturgy**



[1] Magnificat, Vol. 12, No. 8 – From *Forty Gospel Homilies*

[2] 1 Peter 5:8-9

[3] Magnificat, Vol. 12, No. 8 – From *Forty Gospel Homilies*

[4] John 12:24

[5] Fr. John A Hardon, S.J. “Modern Catholic Dictionary” page 86

[6] Second Vatican Council, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 2

[7] John 10:10 [8] Pope John XXIII

**Faith: Seed, Root, Shoot, Fruit (Sacraments) - Lesson and Discussion**

*"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed"*

Each Tuesday night during Night Prayer the Church prays, "Stay sober and alert. Your opponent the devil is prowling like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, solid in your faith."<sup>[2]</sup> Prior to Vatican II, this scripture was prayed each night during Compline (Night Prayer). Needless to say, this verse is so important to the Church that the Church reminds the faithful of the verse at least weekly. Why? We are in a battle and Satan would like to devour our soul, the only way to resist is through faith. It is in the faith that we are firm. Saint Gregory the Great gives a wonderful analogy of how this happens.

**How are the Sacraments, like the growth of a seed into a tree?** "A root is produced from the seed, a shoot from the root, fruit from the shoot; and a seed is produced in the fruit. Let us say, then, that the seed lies hidden within the seed."<sup>[3]</sup> The seed is baptism, the seed of baptism must be "firm" through Confirmation which digs into the soil of grace like a root making the seed firm. Confirmation is also like the shoot, which takes the seed from the darkness of the soil into the world, a personal Pentecost which shoots up, pointing to heaven and evangelizing the world. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are produced and from the fruit come forth a seed. This seed is the Eucharist, which is nourishment for the world as well as sacrifice "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."<sup>[4]</sup>

This firm faith, which enables us to resist Satan, grows in the sacramental life.<sup>[5]</sup>

The first four sacraments deal with our how we continue to live and grow while on this earth

- Birth through Baptism
- Growth through Confirmation
- Nourishment through Eucharist
- Medicine through Penance

The fifth and sixth are how we preserve and perpetuate both physical and spiritual life in the world

- Priesthood through Ordination
- Christian Family through Matrimony

The seventh is how we prepare for the life in heaven

- Journey of the Soul through Anointing of Sick

Through the Sacraments are born into and stay united and a part of the Mystical Body of Christ, Jesus is the head of the body and we are the members. We are expected to be "a part". Just as we expect any human body to grow, we also have the expectation that the Mystical Body

of Christ will grow. "Between the members of this body there exists, further, such a unity and solidarity (cf Eph 4:16) that a member who does not work at the growth of the body to the extent of his possibilities must be considered useless both to the Church and to himself."<sup>[6]</sup> In the growth of a human life there are "milestones" but a person does not live solely to reach these "milestones" but instead lives life in between the "milestones". The sacraments are these spiritual milestones, we do not just receive the sacraments as if we are checking off a spiritual checklist, but instead we are receiving the sacraments so that we are able to "live life to the full"<sup>[7]</sup> in between these important and necessary spiritual "milestones".

**STORY - The Mustard Seed**

Jesus speaks of a "mustard seed" one of the smallest seeds that turns into a great bush / tree. A good activity is to make a holy card. On one side a real mustard seed could be taped or laminated on the card and on the reverse side the verse from this Gospel, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." Have everyone look at the tiny seed. **What is the potential of this seed?** From this small seed lies the whole outline of the tree, the strength and roughness of the wood, the smell and size of the fruit, the greenness of the leaves. All of that in a tiny seed. **What does this mustard seed say about the potential of our Faith?** Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfilled potential. ... but with what it is still possible for you to do."<sup>[8]</sup> In this Gospel verse, Jesus is asking us to think about our unfilled potential about what we will be. We have God's Grace we have the outline, the blueprint of holiness within the small seed of faith. It might be hard for us to see that greatness, that holiness within our self, within our sometimes weak personal faith, but greatness is there.