

## Lectionary Faith-Sharing Community

### 11TH ORDINARY SUNDAY

Cycle B - June 13, 2021



#### OPENING PRAYER

Guide: *It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to your name, Most High,*

All: **The just one shall flourish like the palm tree, like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow.**

Leader: *They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.*

All: **They shall bear fruit even in old age; vigorous and sturdy shall they be.**

Guide: *We invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit:*

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send, Lord your spirit and renew the face of the earth. Oh God, that you have instructed the hearts of your faithful with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us through the same spirit that always enjoy her divine consolation. By Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

#### FIRST READING [ Ezekiel 17 (22-24) ]

***Thus says the Lord God:***

***I, too, will take from the crest of the cedar, from its topmost branches tear off a tender shoot, and plant it on a high and lofty mountain; on the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it. It shall put forth branches and bear fruit, and become a majestic cedar. Birds of every kind shall dwell beneath it, every winged thing in the shade of its boughs.***

***And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, bring low the high tree, lift high the lowly tree, wither up the green tree, and make the withered tree bloom.***

***As I, the Lord, have spoken, so will I do.***

The exiles in Babylon, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, lost all hope and suffered greatly, remembering along the roads of a strange city the solemnity of the festivals that were once celebrated in the temple of Jerusalem. They had to endure the ridicule of a foreign people who had defeated and deported them and who interpreted their victory as a victory of their gods over Yahweh.

Ezekiel announces the reestablishment of the Davidical dynasty. Yahweh himself will transplant a shoot and it will grow on the highest mountain in Israel, that is, in Zion, until it becomes a leafy cedar in which all kinds of birds will nest.

This transplanted "offspring" will be a descendant of Joachim, whom Matthew calls Jeconiah and names him among the ancestors of Jesus (Read Mt 1:11). It is, therefore, a messianic prophecy in which the image of the "cosmic tree" is used (Read Dan 4: 7-9), an allusion to a universal dominion to which all peoples will come.

The proud tree of the Babylonian empire will be humbled by Yahweh, who will exalt the humble tree of the house of David, giving it an unsuspected freshness.

(1) Read Luke 1:49-55. Compare with the reading and comment.

(2) Read Psalm 103. Stop at each verse and meditate on what the Word of God reveals to us through this psalm.

**SECOND READING** [ 2 Corinthians 5 (6-10) ]

**Brothers and sisters:**

***We are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord.***

***Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.***

Man has his true homeland in the Lord and now in this world he is exiled. We still do not see what is our home, but faith feeds our way to it.

The important thing in this world is to accept Christian responsibility and please the Lord, before whom all will appear to be judged; the meaning of individual death is an encounter with the Lord.

This reading dictates to us a practical conduct in the life of faith that we currently live. We walk in faith; we can not see. In reality, we are far from the Lord, because we are in our body; but we are both close to the Lord in faith.

(1) Read Philippians 1:21. Reflect and comment.

(2) Read Hebrews 11:1. Reflect and comment.

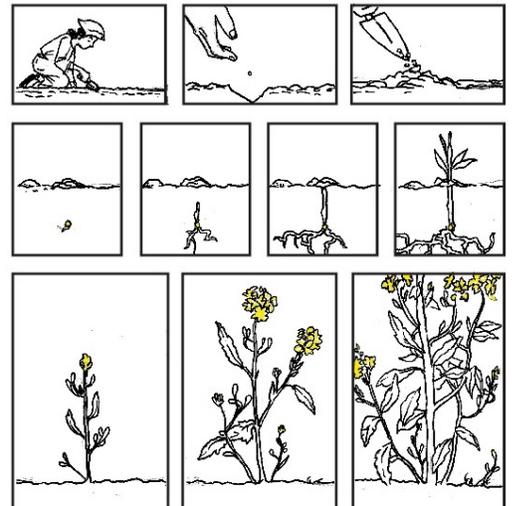
**GOSPEL** [ Mark 4 (26-34) ]

**Jesus said to the crowds:**

***“This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise night and day and through it all the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come.”***

***He said, “To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.”***

***With many such parables he spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.***



In the parable of the persevering peasant, the kingdom of God is compared to the slow growth of the seed until its harvest, and, simultaneously, to the long inactivity of the peasant before his hectic activity of gathering or harvesting. This is equivalent to saying that God is the farmer: he is undoubtedly not going to stop intervening and as spectacularly as a reaper in the harvest.

It is true that throughout the ministry of Jesus, God seems not to intervene: he leaves Christ isolated, unsuccessful, increasingly rejected by his own.

God lets the seed grow slowly, but it doesn't hurt to wait. That those who collaborate in the establishment of the kingdom do not lose their trust in God: He has begun and there can be no doubt that, after the silence, he will carry out his work. Let him be patiently awaited, without wanting to get ahead of Him. We must know that this kingdom is already near through Jesus Christ and we must recognize it by already acting in the poverty of the means and the slowness of growth.

The parable of the mustard seed nurtures trust in God by highlighting the contrast between the discreet beginnings of the kingdom and the magnitude of the glory at the end of time.

With this parable Jesus surely wanted to respond to the objection of those who opposed the smallness of the means used by Jesus for the glory of the expected Kingdom, and who ridiculed the poverty and ignorance of Jesus' disciples in the face of the triumphal procession which was supposed to inaugurate the end times.

In reality, in the minuscule the great is already at work: even in the world that does not know the kingdom, it is already at work; even in the heart of the hardest sinner he can still shine a little light and become glory and devouring fire. It's about taking God seriously despite all appearances of him.

(1) What does "the silence of God" consist of?

(2) The seed has a force that does not depend on the sower. Once sown, it mysteriously grows until it bears fruit, without the sower intervening. He does not even know how the whole process of growing the seed happens. The same is true of the kingdom of God. Reflect and comment.

### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have being blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father ...**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*

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