



Bringing Home the Word

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

June 13, 2021

Spreading Seeds

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

The kingdom of God has an inward power, an effervescence with which it is equipped, that makes it a force of growth and multiplication. Jesus compares the kingdom with a seed. You plant it in favorable soil and, you know not how, it springs up into a little plant and then eventually into a full-grown tree. Its life principle is not given by the soil—although that helps it grow—but rather it has power of itself to expand.

The Christian life and the kingdom are very much like this. At baptism we have received supernatural grace in our souls. And if given suitable support,

that faith will grow and become the transformative element of our lives. It will drive us toward a life of faith, hope, and love. It will lead us to forgive others, improve society, and transform everything for good.

The same can be said of the Church, Christ's kingdom of love. Christ planted the seed of faith in his apostles and that seed spread and thrived all across Europe. Their faith multiplied and grew until all throughout the world the fruits of their faith are on display as a veritable kingdom of charity: hospitals, universities, soup kitchens, hospices, shelters for the battered and homeless, retreat centers, chapels, churches, museums, research and rehabilitation centers, religious orders, lay associations, volunteer groups, and the list could and does continue on and on. There is a force in faith and love that cannot be contained! +

Sunday Readings

Ezekiel 17:22–24

On the mountain height of Israel / I will plant it.

It shall put forth branches and bear fruit, / and become a majestic cedar.

2 Corinthians 5:6–10

We walk by faith, not by sight.

Mark 4:26–34

[Jesus said,] "But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches."

The apostles' faith multiplied until, all throughout the world, the fruits of their faith are on display.

A Word from Pope Francis

How often do we see a man or woman arrive at work with a weary face, with a tired countenance and, when we ask them, "What happened?" they answer: "I only slept two hours because we are taking turns at home to be close to... our grandfather, our grandmother"...These are heroic deeds, the heroism of families!

—General audience, June 10, 2015



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Do I let the force of my faith multiply into acts of love and service?
- If I don't feel this force within me, what can I do to awaken it?

Pray Radically

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

On news and information services, reporters often refer to terrorists as radicals. This automatically puts *radical* on the list of bad words and makes anyone who is radical or has radical tendencies seem bad. We should be careful when using the word *radical* to refer to extremists or fundamentalists because not all are radical. I want to reclaim the word *radical*. It's not a bad word.

The difference between extremist and radical is simple. Radical means to return to the root or origin of something. So a radical Christian would seem very similar to Jesus and a radical Muslim would appear to be very much like Muhammad. On the other hand, an extremist is one who holds ideas or beliefs that can result in action that is beyond the norm of what is normally expected or acceptable. A Christian or Muslim extremist adheres to that which is beyond the norm for Jesus or Muhammad.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *Deus Caritas Est* (2005) that "it is time to reaffirm the importance of prayer in the face of the activism and the growing secularism of many Christians engaged in charitable work." He continues, "The Christian who prays does not claim to be able to change God's plans or



correct what he has foreseen. Rather he seeks an encounter with the Father of Jesus Christ." And still further, "A personal relationship with God and an abandonment to his will can prevent man from being demeaned and save him from falling prey to the teaching of fanaticism and terrorism." Prayer seeks an encounter. Relationship is the key. Prayer is a relationship. Prayer, if it is radical, can be the remedy for extremism.

It's said that couples who are married for many years start to look, act, and even think like each other. Some even develop

a deep intuitive sense that allows one to anticipate the needs of the other. We become like the people we spend time with, especially if we like them.

The disciples spent a lot of time with Jesus and in doing so they began to speak as he spoke and act as he acted. They became Christlike simply by spending time with him. Something of Jesus rubbed off on his followers. People could see Jesus in them. Radical prayer calls us back to this kind of relationship: spending time with Jesus; lingering before the Lord; passing time in the presence of the Holy One; and staying with him long enough to have something of Jesus rub off on us. Through radical prayer, we start to look, think, and act like the Divine, and others can see something of Jesus in us. +

**PRAYER**

*Lord, you reveal the kingdom
of God to all people.
Help me bear witness
to God's kingdom of
compassion and peace.*

—From *Faithful Meditations for Every Day
in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney

Want to be more like the Divine? There is a way.

WEEKDAY READINGS

June 14–19

Monday, Weekday:

2 Cor 6:1–10 / Mt 5:38–42

Tuesday, Weekday:

2 Cor 8:1–9 / Mt 5:43–48

Wednesday, Weekday:

2 Cor 9:6–11 / Mt 6:1–6, 16–18

Thursday, Weekday:

2 Cor 11:1–11 / Mt 6:7–15

Friday, Weekday:

2 Cor 11:18, 21–30 / Mt 6:19–23

Saturday, Weekday:

2 Cor 12:1–10 / Mt 6:24–34

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