

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, June 13, 2021

The Sure and Silent Growth of God's Kingdom

Written by Douglas Sousa

Ezekiel 17:22-24

2 Corinthians 5:6-10

Mark 4:26-34



My first science project was to plant a seed in a Styrofoam cup and keep track of its growth. My grandmother helped me dig up some dirt and plant the seed. I soaked it with water and put it on the windowsill.

The next morning, I woke up at 5:00 a.m. and ran to the window to see if it had grown. When I saw that nothing happened, I cried and ran to wake my grandmother up. "I think we killed the seed! It didn't grow!" My grandmother laughed and assured me that I didn't kill it and that it just takes time for the seed to grow. So, I asked her, "How will I know that the seed is growing? What if it isn't growing and it's dead?" She said that I just had to trust that it would grow because that's what seeds do.

It took about a week or so, but I finally saw a little green shoot peeking up from just below the dirt. My grandmother was right. The seed grew because that's what seeds do.

[In this Sunday's gospel](#), Jesus uses the image of the seed to describe God's Kingdom. Like a seed planted in the ground, God works in hidden ways. We cannot always understand what He is doing or why things are turning out the way they are. We wonder why He is not doing more to end suffering or why so many people do not believe in the gospel of love. But somehow our Heavenly Father is using all the world's events — both the good and the bad — to bring His Kingdom to fruition. All we can do is trust that He has it all under control and that He knows what He's doing. And we have to wait patiently until it is finally manifested in all its glory.

We can understand the truth of Jesus' words by looking at our own history. There were probably times when we couldn't understand why people left our lives, why our careers didn't turn out the way we thought, or why what we expected out of life never came to pass. Looking back, however, we can see how everything fit into place. Without knowing it and without controlling it, the pieces came together. Now we can't imagine our lives being any different. Like the seed hidden in the soil, we blossomed in ways that we could never have planned on our own. We realize that it could only have been by God's plan that it all worked out.

Saint Paul describes the attitude we must have, "We walk by faith and not by sight." In a culture hostile to the gospel of life, we base our decisions not on what is popular and convenient, but on what God has revealed through His Church. In a society that devalues the dignity of human life, we work to feed the hungry, care for the sick, and visit prisoners. We can only persevere in living the good news by trusting that God will somehow make it worthwhile even if we don't see any progress.

We walk by faith and not by sight. God's Kingdom is growing silently, but surely, because that's what God's Kingdom does. We won't see the Kingdom in full flower until we enter into our heavenly reward. But we can be sure that just as the flower is more beautiful than the seed it grew from, so God's Kingdom will be infinitely more glorious than anything we can imagine. Until then, no matter how dark and hopeless our world may seem, we live, work, and pray with trust that it is all going according to God's plan.

Douglas Sousa

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
We trust in Your goodness and love.
You treat everything You have created
with compassion.
Your Spirit is at work giving us growth
And allowing us to flourish.
We place ourselves into Your loving hands
With full confidence that You are at work
Even when the world seems to be a
Cold and dark place.
We work with confidence
That You are bringing Your plan to fruition
Even through our meager efforts.
May we always persevere in faith,
hope, and love
Through your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.