

## IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS

(MATTHEW 13:24-43)



Their future doesn't look very promising. After all, Jesus and his followers are just a small group of people in a little corner of Palestine, with few friends among the religious leaders or those in authority, and with a message that doesn't seem to be reaching very far.

Jesus wants his disciples to imagine what the kingdom of God will look like. He uses images, little stories or parables, to paint a picture of the kingdom of God and its future growth.

He talks about the mustard seed. His listeners know that the mustard seed is tiny, yet Jesus tells them that from the smallest of seeds comes a tree large enough for birds to build their nests in it. The kingdom of God is like that mustard seed, he says.

A second image hammers home his point. The kingdom of God is like the yeast a woman mixes in with flour. A small amount of yeast has a huge effect – it has the power to produce bread for a lot of people. The kingdom of God is like yeast, Jesus tells them.

Jesus's message is clear: the kingdom of God may have small, unimpressive beginnings, but like the mustard seed and the yeast, it will grow into something big and wonderful, and have an effect out of proportion to its humble birth. ■

### SAY

**“Lord, help me to hasten the flowering of God's kingdom of justice, peace and love by being a seed, a leaven, in the life of my church and my community. Amen.”**

### DO

Many feel excluded from or hurt by the Church. How can you be a grain of yeast in their lives that comforts, heals and builds up? The little things we do can make an enormous difference for God.

### PRAY

Pray for yourself and for people everywhere that they will nurture the good that is in themselves and in others.

### REFLECT

These are challenging times for the Church in Europe and in the West. Secularism is on the rise, fallout from the abuse scandals continues, many have given up the practice of the faith, while others who remain feel angry, confused and demoralised.

It can seem like the mustard seed is desiccating; that the yeast has lost its power. It can seem that the promise Jesus made to his disciples is turning to ashes, and that, far from expanding, the kingdom of God is contracting and even dying.

That is why it's important to hold fast to the promise Jesus made to his disciples and to us. Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God will flourish because it is God's will that it will flourish. And we are called to trust Jesus. We trust him by putting our faith in small things and in God's grace.

Lots of things are happening that are helping the kingdom to grow. Pope Francis talks of a Church that is on the streets, open, compassionate, inclusive. He is showing the way. Many Catholics are looking seriously at what it means to be the Church. They are realising that it isn't made up just of clergy and religious but of all the baptised. They are thinking about what needs to be changed in the Church and how they can be a seed or a leaven bringing new life to their parish. Just as the kingdom of God grew out of small things, they know that the little things we do can grow into something wonderful.

Think about those who have been a seed, a leaven in your life, those family members or others who shaped and inspired you in the faith. How can you be a seed, a leaven, in the lives of others? ■

### LEARN

Even though there is a lot of evil in the world, God will have the last word.

Every good deed builds up the kingdom of God.

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

See, I have God for my help.  
The Lord sustains my soul.  
I will sacrifice to you with willing heart,  
and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

Show favour, O Lord, to your servants  
and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace,  
that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity,  
they may be ever watchful in keeping your  
commands.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING** Wisdom 12:13.16-19

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

There is no god, other than you, who cares  
for everything,  
to whom you might have to prove that you  
never judged unjustly.

Your justice has its source in strength,  
your sovereignty over all makes you lenient  
to all.

You show your strength when your sovereign  
power is questioned  
and you expose the insolence of those who  
know it;

but, disposing of such strength, you are mild  
in judgement,  
you govern us with great lenience,  
for you have only to will, and your power is  
there.

By acting thus you have taught a lesson to  
your people  
how the virtuous man must be kindly to his  
fellow men,  
and you have given your sons the good hope  
that after sin you will grant repentance.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**PSALM** Psalm 85

Response:

**O Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

1. O Lord, you are good and forgiving,  
full of love to all who call.

2. Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer  
and attend to the sound of my voice. (R.)

All the nations shall come to adore you  
and glorify your name, O Lord:  
for you are great and do marvellous  
deeds,  
you who alone are God. (R.)

3. But you, God of mercy and compassion,  
slow to anger, O Lord,  
abounding in love and truth,  
turn and take pity on me. (R.)

**SECOND READING** Romans 8:26-27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the  
Romans.

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. For  
when we cannot choose words in order to pray  
properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea  
in a way that could never be put into words, and  
God who knows everything in our hearts knows  
perfectly well what he means, and that the  
pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are  
according to the mind of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
enlighten the eyes of our mind,  
so that we can see what hope his call holds  
for us.

Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** Matthew 13:24-43

(For Shorter Form Mt 13:24-30, read between  
> <)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
Matthew.

>Jesus put a parable before the crowds, "The  
kingdom of heaven may be compared to a  
man who sowed good seed in his field. While  
everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed  
darnel all among the wheat, and made off.  
When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, the  
darnel appeared as well. The owner's servants  
went to him and said, 'Sir, was it not good seed  
that you sowed in your field? If so, where does  
the darnel come from?' 'Some enemy has done  
this,' he answered. And the servants said, 'Do  
you want us to go and weed it out?' But he said,  
'No, because when you weed out the darnel you  
might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both  
grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall  
say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie  
it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat  
into my barn.'" <

He put another parable before them, "The  
kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which  
a man took and sowed in his field. It is the  
smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown  
it is the biggest shrub of all and becomes a tree  
so that the birds of the air come and shelter in  
its branches."

He told them another parable, "The kingdom  
of heaven is like the yeast a woman took and  
mixed in with three measures of flour till it was  
leavened all through."

In all this Jesus spoke to the crowds in  
parables; indeed, he would never speak to  
them except in parables. This was to fulfil the  
prophecy:

I will speak to you in parables  
and expound things hidden since the  
foundation of the world.

Then, leaving the crowds, he went to the house;  
and his disciples came to him and said, "Explain  
the parable about the darnel in the field to us."  
He said in reply, "The sower of the good seed  
is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the  
good seed is the subjects of the kingdom; the  
darnel, the subjects of the evil one; the enemy  
who sowed them, the devil; the harvest is the  
end of the world; the reapers are the angels.  
Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and  
burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time.  
The Son of Man will send his angels and they  
will gather out of his kingdom all things that

provoke offences and all who do evil, and throw  
them into the blazing furnace, where there will  
be weeping and grinding of teeth. Then the  
virtuous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of  
their Father. Listen, anyone who has ears!"

>The Gospel of the Lord.<

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.  
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,

he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and  
glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins

and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice  
brought to completion varied offerings of the  
law,

accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your  
faithful servants  
and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of  
Abel,

so that what each has offered to the honour  
of your majesty  
may benefit the salvation of all.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful,  
has made a memorial of his wonders;  
he gives food to those who fear him.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Graciously be present to your people, we  
pray, O Lord,  
and lead those you have imbued with  
heavenly mysteries  
to pass from former ways to newness of life.  
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.