Tuesday of the Thirtieth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 13:18-21): Jesus said, “What is the Kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and planted in the garden. When it was fully grown, it became a large bush and the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches.” Again he said, “To what shall I compare the Kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch of dough was leavened.”

“What is the kingdom of God like?”

Fr. Lucas Francisco MATEO Seco
(Pamplona, Navarra, Spain)

Today, through two parables, the liturgical readings reveal to us one of the defining characteristics of the Kingdom of God: it is something that grows slowly—like a mustard seed—but eventually becomes so large that it provides shelter for the birds of the air. As Tertullian declared: "We are but of yesterday, and we have filled every place." Through this parable, Our Lord calls for patience, fortitude, and hope. These virtues are especially necessary for those dedicated to spreading the Kingdom of God. One must know how to wait for the sown seed—with God’s grace and human cooperation—to grow, sinking its roots into good soil and rising little by little until it becomes a tree. First and foremost, we must have faith in the potential—the fruitfulness—contained in the seed of the Kingdom of God. That seed is the Word; it is also the Eucharist, sown within us through Holy Communion. Our Lord Jesus Christ likened Himself to the "grain of wheat [that] falls to the ground and dies... [and] produces much fruit" (Jn 12:24).

The Kingdom of God, Our Lord continues, “is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch of dough was leavened" (Lk 13:21). Here, too, the focus is on the ability of yeast to leaven the whole dough. This is the case with “the remnant of Israel” mentioned in the Old Testament: the “remnant” will save and leaven the entire people. To continue with the parable: the yeast simply needs to be within the dough—to reach the people—acting like salt that preserves against corruption and seasons the entire meal (cf. Mt 5:13). Time must also be allowed for the yeast to do its work.

These parables encourage patience and steadfast hope. They refer to the Kingdom of God and the Church, and they also apply to the growth of this same Kingdom within each of us.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Let confidence and a lively Faith uphold the soul; he who believes and hopes obtains all things.” (Saint Teresa of Jesus)

- "The victory of the Lord is certain: his love will make every seed of goodness present on the ground sprout and grow." (Francis)

- “... It is right and good to pray so that the coming of the kingdom of justice and peace may influence the march of history, but it is just as important to bring the help of prayer into humble, everyday situations...” (Catechism of the Church Catholic, n 2660)