Friday of the Third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mk* 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 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.

“This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land… and the seed would sprout and grow”

Fr. Jordi PASCUAL i Bancells
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Today, Jesus is telling people about an experience very close to His life: “a man were to scatter seed on the land…, the seed would sprout and grow… Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear” (Mk 4:26-28). With these words Jesus is speaking of the kingdom of God, consisting “of sanctity and grace, Truth and Life, justice, love and peace” (Preface of the Solemnity of our Lord Christ the King), that He is bringing us. We must make this kingdom real. First within each one of us; afterwards for our entire world.

In every Christian's soul, Jesus Christ has sown —by virtue of the Baptism— the grace, the sanctity, the Truth… It is necessary that these seeds sprout, grow and bear a multitude of good fruits, our deeds: deeds of service and charity, of kindness and generosity, of sacrifice to properly comply with our daily duty and to make those around us happy; deeds of constant prayer, of forgiveness and understanding, of effort to grow in virtue, of joy…

Thus, this Kingdom of God —that begins within each one of us— will extend to our family, to our people,

to our society, to our world. Because, he who lives like that, “what does he do but prepare the path of God…, so that the strength of grace fills him and the light of truth lights him up; so that his ways to God are always straight?” (Saint Gregory the Great).

The seed begins very small, “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.” (Mk 4:31-32). But the force of God's will scatters it all over and makes it grow up with a surprising vigor. Jesus asks us today —as in the beginning of Christianity— to spread His kingdom throughout the entire world.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “So you too, sow Christ in your garden, so that the beauty of your works may flourish and the many fragances of the various virtues perfume it.” (Saint Ambrose of Milan)

- “The seed’s weakness is its strength, its breaking open is its power. Thus the Kingdom of God is like this: a humanly small reality, made up of those who are poor in heart, of those who do not rely on their own power but on that of the love of God.” (Benedict XVI)

- “By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will... It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are closely associated that these may always be effected and grow according to Christ and maybe to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer." (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 898)