

BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

June 13, 2021 • 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Mark 4:26–34

Being the Mustard Seed

Jesus continues to talk to the people in parables. He uses everyday things to help them remember the point of his teaching. He tells the crowd that the kingdom of God is like a tiny mustard seed that grows into a huge bush that can serve as a nesting place for the birds in the sky.

When I think about that tiny mustard seed and the kingdom of God, I think about the rippling effect one small act of kindness can have. When a person offers a smile or a simple courtesy, it can sometimes change the course of another's day.

I am not a morning person, and with very little effort I have managed to raise a whole family of morning grumps. I remember the days when all seven of us were playing “beat the clock” at 6:30 AM. At best, our “good mornings” were grumbled as we tried to keep out of each other's way. Some mornings our house felt like the proverbial powder keg, just one missing sock away from disaster. On those mornings, one person's outburst over an empty milk carton could sour everyone's day.

I developed my mustard seed theory by watching how that powder keg could be defused—a shared cinnamon bun, some help searching for missing keys, or a ride offered to school. One person's act of kindness could affect everyone. Since I am not my best at daybreak, it took a conscious effort for me to be that person.

I discovered that when I started the day with prayer I could often find a quiet peace inside myself that helped me respond rather than react. It was wonderful to watch how sometimes that mustard seed experience of peace could even grow to fill a household. I picture the kingdom of God as an eternal experience of that peace—an experience we can sometimes taste even on grumpy mornings.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Ask family members to share what gets them out of grumpy moods. How can they get themselves out of a bad mood?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

What are some of the things that set you up to be grumpy? How can you avoid them or work around them? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?