

Small and Miraculous

This Week's Readings at Mass

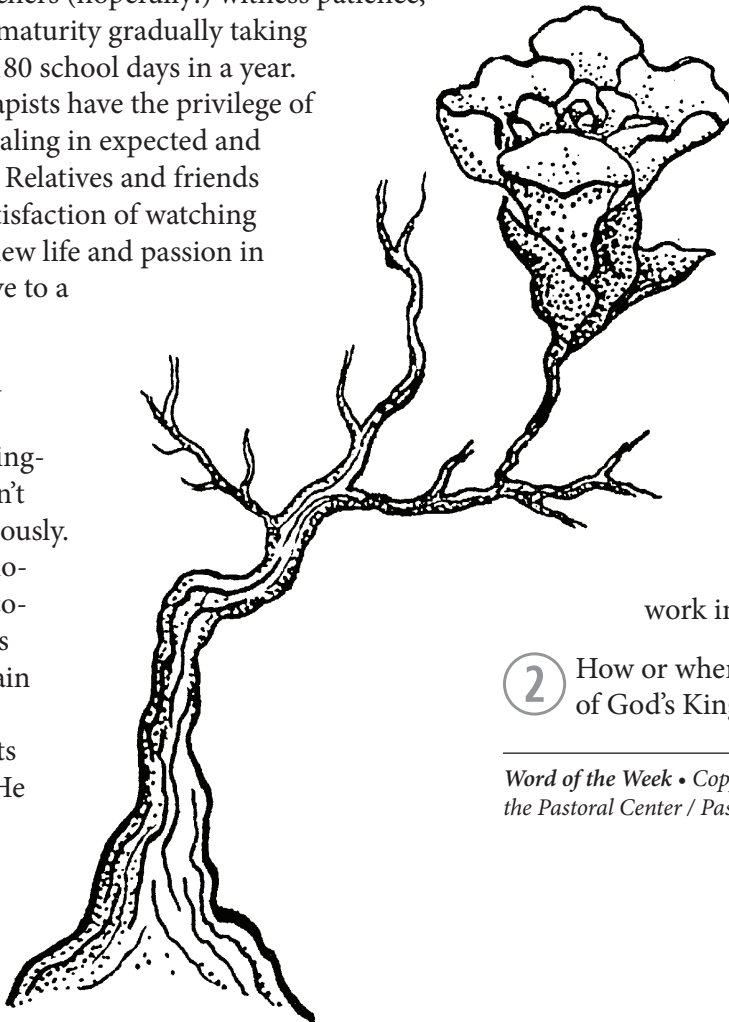
- ▶ Ezekiel 17:22-24 - Prophecy of the restoration of Israel
- ▶ 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 - Walking by faith
- ▶ Mark 4:26-34 - Seed grows by itself and the mustard seed

Both the first reading from Ezekiel and the Gospel reading point to God's power to turn small and seemingly insignificant things into works of great beauty, strength, and abundance. Ezekiel imagines this as God planting a tender shoot which becomes a majestic cedar tree. Jesus uses the image of the tiny mustard seed growing into a large plant that provides a haven for birds.

We don't have to be farmers or gardeners to experience how the Kingdom of God is slowly revealed. Parents have this experience when they conceive a child and are stunned by the miracle of their new baby at birth. Teachers (hopefully!) witness patience, compassion, and maturity gradually taking root throughout 180 school days in a year. Doctors and therapists have the privilege of seeing patients healing in expected and unexpected ways. Relatives and friends experience the satisfaction of watching a loved one find new life and passion in a courageous move to a second career.

As with seeds and plants, all growth takes time. The Kingdom of God doesn't appear instantaneously. Racism, sexism, homophobia, and economic inequalities still cause great pain and suffering. Because God respects human free will, He doesn't intervene and fix everything for us in a split second.

JFD



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“Planted in the house of the Lord, the just shall flourish.”

Sheepish Question:
What kind of seeds do I want to plant in faith this week?

What God *does* do is surprise us by helping the smallest of seeds to grow and flourish in time. Our task is to plant those seeds and nurture them while we watch, wait, pray, and trust that God will grow them into people, communities, organizations, and locales of beauty and strength.

Questions of the Week

- 1 In what area of your life are you privileged to see God's work in progress?
- 2 How or where are you asked to plant the seeds of God's Kingdom?