

ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

June 16, 2024

Gospel: (Mark 4: 26-34)

Jesus said to the crowd: This is how it is with the reign of God. A man scatters seed on the ground. He goes to bed and gets up day after day. Through it all the seed sprouts and grows without his knowing how it happens. The soil produces of itself first the blade, then the ear. When the crop is ready he 'wields the sickle, for the time is ripe for harvest."

Reflection:

Have you ever noticed how many parables of Our Lord center on the image of the growth of small seeds? These parables underline for us the need of patience. These parables of growth underline for us the point that we should not look for immediate results and that harvests do not ripen quickly. In this age of instant results, it is difficult for us to be patient with the slow growth of our work. We must live with the conviction that it is one person who sows and another who reaps. Be content to think of yourself as a person who sows. If we, by the grace of God, gladly do some careful sowing now, God will give the increase in his good time. (McCullen, *Deep Down Things*, p. 70-71)

Vincenian Meditation:

St. Vincent de Paul was a great inspiration to Frederic Ozanam in his life, work and writings. For Vincent, however, and for Frederic, it was the charity of Christ which pressed them on to do what they did for the poor of their time. It is a mystery how God could love mankind, disfigured by sin and infidelity. Likewise, it is a mystery of God that you, as members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, are able to love people who are often so unattractive in their poverty. As you work for and visit the poor, take heart from the thought that you are reflecting into this dark world the light and love of God. St. Vincent told us: "I should not consider a poor peasant or a poor woman according to their exterior, nor according to what seems to be the extent of their intelligence; for often they do not seem to have either the face or the mind of reasonable persons, so gross and earthly are they. But turn the medal and you will see by the light of faith that the Son of God, who wished to be poor, is represented to us by these poor..." (McCullen, *Deep Down Things*, p. 68-69)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

How have you learned to "turn the medal" to find the face of Christ in the poor?

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, be with us as we help the poor,

teach us how to be patient.

Jesus, be with us as we sow seeds of our works,

teach us how to trust in you.

Jesus, be with us in our service to our suffering brothers and sisters,

teach us to "turn the medal" to find you in the poor. Amen

