

**Reflection on the Gospel-11th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
(Mark 4:26-34)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

The first of the parables in today's gospel reading has no parallel in the other gospels. It compares God's kingdom to a trusting sower who scatters the seed by day, sleeps by night, and simply observes the "earth produce of itself" until it is time to harvest the grain. The sower's actions of scattering, sleeping, rising, and going in with his sickle are paralleled by his "not-knowing how" the seed is transformed into grain. We may, in our times, have a more sophisticated, more scientific understanding of the process of growth. We have no less reason to stand in awe at the wonder of it all.

In an era of urbanization, supermarket chains, and online shopping even for groceries, we can easily lose sight of the source of food and the miracle of food production. This little parable might serve as a reminder of the goodness of the Earth and of the God who sustains our planetary home. It might inspire us to contemplate the myriad ways in which the Earth speaks to us of God and God's empire or kingdom.

At another level, we might ask about the identity of the sower. We might question how the sower's actions and attitudes provide an image of God's reign. Is it in the sower's trusting that all will be well while "not-knowing"? Is it in the observation that the grain is ripe for the harvest? Is it in the prompt action to bring in the harvest? Parables are meant to tease their hearers/readers. They are open-ended and challenging.

The second parable appears in all three synoptic gospels. Matthew and Luke both parallel the mustard seed parable with a parable about a woman mixing yeast into flour. Mark, in contrast, juxtaposes his mustard seed parable with that of the trusting sower. Mustard seeds were tiny, although they were not the smallest of seeds and have never been known to become the largest of shrubs. The idea that God's reign provides shelter for the birds to make their nests is a challenging one at a time when so many species are becoming extinct precisely because their habitats are being destroyed by human activity.

Some scholars have pointed out that the mustard seed was a weed. To compare God's reign with a weed may have brought a smile or two. It would certainly have exercised the minds of Jesus' audience. Maybe Jesus' disciples were in need of encouragement even in the early stages of the Galilean ministry. Maybe the curious and hostile were in need of a reminder to take this movement seriously, for extraordinary things can come from the most inauspicious beginnings. Opposition to Jesus had surfaced at the outset. Mark's community may also have been experiencing opposition and feeling the need for the wisdom that comes from a carefully crafted and perfectly timed story.

11TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME — YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong
(The Parish of St Alipius, the communities of Ballarat East and Buninyong are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.)

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 9.30 am—1.30 pm
Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East 3350
Telephone: 5332 6611
Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Website: <http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au>

**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 18 JUNE 2018**

MONDAY: No Mass
TUESDAY: 10.00 am Funeral Mass in Parish Church (S. McCartin)
WEDNESDAY: 10.30 am Funeral Mass in Parish Church (D. Britt)
THURSDAY: 9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY: 9.30 am in Parish Church

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	10.30 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	9.00 AM

NATIVITY of ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

READINGS First: Isaiah 49:1-6
Second: Acts 13:22-26
Gospel: Luke 1:57-66, 80

RECENT DEATHS: Doreen Britt, Sheila McCartin.

ANNIVERSARIES: Rosalie Barry, Kevin Coleman, Frank Dodd, Jack Dodd, Harold Dunham, Mary Hoy, P. Purcell, Nora Roach, Richard Roach, Thomas Roach, Danny Roche, Janis Stubbings.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Pauline Murphy, Maria Wilson, Aurora Ferrer, Patricia Harman, Leonie Sinnot, John Darroch.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 7: K. Cummins©, J. O'Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck.
Next Week: Team 8: B. McKeegan©, M. Ridsdale, K. McKeegan.

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,204.20
	Loose:	\$ 150.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>665.00</u>
		\$ 2,019.20
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 995.00



CARMEL HARAHAH

Our warmest best wishes to Carmel Harahan who is celebrating her 90th birthday. Congratulations Carmel!

FIRST EUCHARIST

Welcome and congratulations to our young people from St Francis Xavier who have completed their initiation into the community of the Church through the reception of Holy Communion. Thank you to parents, Caitee and the school community for supporting and preparing the children for this special time. We pray that they celebrate the Eucharist with joy and often.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY ST ALIPIUS PARISH INFO SESSION

Parents, parishioners, volunteers—Thinking about helping out with Children's Liturgy or just interested to learn more?
Join us to learn more about the new Children's Liturgy program commencing in term 3 at St Alipius Church. Thursday, 21st June, 6.30 pm in St Alipius Church Hall. For more information or to RSVP, please email Liz: lmccartin@saballarat.catholic.edu.au or phone St Alipius School Office 5331 1816.

PRE-LOVED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

St Alipius is seeking donations of children's books for children to use during week-end church services. If you have books that your children have grown out of, please consider donating them to the children of our parish. We are particularly looking for children's prayer books, picture bibles, bible stories, or other books that have themes of respect, compassion, justice, or Christianity. There will be a donations box in the St Alipius School Office, and another box in the St Alipius Church Foyer. Thanks in anticipation!

DAMASCUS COLLEGE PERFORMING ARTS

DC Performing Arts presents *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. 8 pm on July 25, 26, 27, and 28; plus 2 pm Matinee session on July 28. at Damascus College Valda Ward Auditorium. Tickets: Adults \$15, Children \$10, Family (2 adults + 2 children) \$40. Tickets at www.damascus.vic.edu.au.

COUNCIL OF PRIESTS MEETING

The priests of the Diocese are meeting on Tuesday, 19th June for their bi-annual Council of Priests gathering. After the meeting there will be a celebration of Eucharist at St Patrick's Cathedral at 5.00 pm. At this Mass the 2018 Jubilarians will be celebrated:

25 years Kevin Lenehan
40 years Gerry Prunty, Kevin Maloney & John Fitzgerald
50 years Dennis Dennehy (Ireland)

All parishioners are welcome to gather for the Mass.

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020—THE PROCESS

The process of the Plenary Council is a journey of listening to God by listening to one another. All Australians have been invited to participate in the open process of dialogue and discernment about the future of the Catholic Church in Australia. The focus question is: *What is God asking of the Church at this time?*

It is anticipated that issues nominated will range from the specific to the broad, from the place of women in the Church, to clericalism, to the Church's position on refugees, to the lack of ordinations and lay leadership in the Church.

Parish and school groups are encouraged to conduct listening/dialogue sessions in small groups, using the process set out by the Plenary Council.

You are encouraged to visit the Plenary Council website at:

<http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>

I am calling for expressions of interest to assist in coordinating this process in our parish. If you can assist, please contact the Parish Office on 5332 6611.

Fr Peter

CORPUS CHRISTI SEMINARY RAFFLE—CAN YOU HELP?

Each year the Corpus Christi Parents & Friends Association holds a raffle to raise funds to assist students, staff and seminary in general.

Would there be a parishioner or two who would be a contact person to receive the raffle books, make the tickets available for sale, collect money and return the butts, etc? If you are able to assist, please phone Lucy in the Parish Office on 5332 6611. Raffle Prizes: Travel \$15,000; Gift Cards—Good Guys \$500, \$200, & \$100. Tickets \$10.

REFUGEE WEEK JUNE 16-24

Soup and Sandwich Luncheon: 12.30 pm Wednesday, 20 June 2018 at Nazareth House Hall, Miller Street Ballarat. Entry \$20. Performances by Namarilly Bagarook Dancers, Australian Irish Dance Co Ballarat, South Sudanese Cultural Group. Presentation: "Caroline Chisholm—The Immigrants Friend". Stalls and competitions. All funds raised will assist local asylum seekers and their families. See Notice Board for full details.

Ecumenical Service with Interfaith Prayers: 5.30 pm Cathedral Church of Christ the King, 49 Lydiard St South. Followed by refreshments at 6.30 pm. Attendance is free, all welcome.

Evening with Sr Brigid Arthur: Wednesday, 20 June; 7 pm for 7:30 pm start, at the "Green Room", Welcome Centre, 145 Victoria St, Ballarat East. Admission Free. Donation to BASP welcome. Supper provided. See Notice Board for full details.