



Sunday, 14 Jun 2015: Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year B

Gospel Mk 4:26-34 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

The mustard seed, the smallest of all the seeds, grows into the biggest shrub of all.

Jesus said to the crowds, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, he loses no time; he starts to reap because the harvest has come.' He also said, 'What can we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.'

Reflection

A major theme of the Scripture readings is 'Sowing seeds of faith'.

Hope and patience also run through all these readings. Each time a seed is planted and a plant emerges, we experience a miracle. So, too, our faith is a miracle. Faith takes root and grows slowly with hidden and mysterious nourishment from God, even when we are unaware of it. Patience is needed by all who wait for the Reign of God.

The seeds of faith have been 'planted' in each of us and we should try to nurture those seeds at all the various stages of our lives. We should also try to nurture the faith of those around us, thereby doing our part to help build the kingdom of God. Jesus said that 'This is what the kingdom of God is like.' Being a part of God's kingdom is a wonderful thing. It will provide us with spiritual nourishment and shelter. It is something to rejoice in. It is something of great value and we all need to do our bit to help nurture the seeds of faith in ourselves and in those around us. What are some ways we can do that?

Although the mystery of God unfolds within human history, we need eyes of faith to recognise it. Like the cedar and the mustard seed, it grows within the concreteness of human experience. Just as the life force that enables the branches of the trees to grow, it cannot itself be seen, so the reign of God is mysterious, even incomprehensible. Still, it is there, inviting us, urging us to move forward, transforming our world.

In Brief

- Root your faith in the Lord.
- Walk by faith.
- The Reign of God is growing.
- Faith grows slowly.
- God sows the seeds of our faith.

Answering Jesus' Call

Let us lead lives with an authentic dimension of social justice.

Let us get on with sowing the seed of the Gospel whenever we get the opportunity

Let God get on with germinating that seed within us in with the power of the Resurrection

St Vinnies Winter Appeal

Thank you for your generosity of your donations for the Vinnies Winter Appeal. I'm sure those who receive the warm blankets, beanies and scarves are grateful of the generosity of the St Oliver's Community.

Sacraments of Initiation

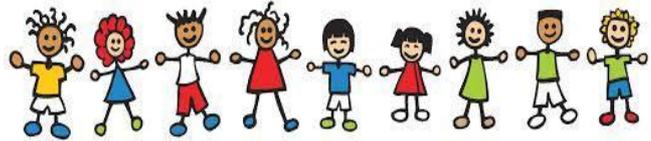
All students who are eligible to receive the sacraments in 2016 are asked to contact one of these parishes:

St Patrick's Cathedral
Phone: (02) 8839 8460

Holy Trinity Granville
Phone: (02) 9637 1904

Holy Family Parish
Phone: (02) 9543 2614

Focus On Learning



Preparing for Student, Parent, Teacher Conferences

Student, parent, teacher conferences provide an important opportunity for teachers, students and parents to acknowledge student progress and achievement and discuss some clear steps forward for future growth.

Benefits of this process include:

For Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Enhances self esteem by allowing them to share their learning opportunities in a positive environment● Critically involves students in self assessment and allows them to take responsibility for their own learning
For Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increases understanding of learning and assessment● Allows the parent to participate in the reporting process rather than merely responding to it● Provides evidence to support twice yearly written reports

During the student, parent, teacher conference the students will be sharing some of their work and explaining what they feel they have done well, as well as where they feel they need to improve. The teachers will then explain your child's achievements and areas for development in further detail and answer any of your questions or concerns.

The following are some tips offered by Michael Grose – Australia's leading parenting educator - to help make the conference a successful experience for everyone involved:

1. Prepare well

Before the conference, list any questions that you want to raise. Writing information down in advance ensures that your point of view is expressed and that critical information is covered. You may also like to take notes during the meeting so that vital information isn't missed.

2. Ask specific questions

Engage with your child by asking specific questions that show your interest and display your understanding of what they are showing you. Clarify any information you don't understand with the teacher so that you have a clear picture of your child's learning.

3. Stay solution-focused

When your child's learning challenges are discussed it can be difficult not to become defensive or sceptical however, it is important to stay open-minded. Try to view the information shared as an opportunity to discuss your child's strengths and needs as well as any further support required.

4. Trust the teacher

Teachers view your child through a different lens than you and their conclusions and solutions can seem at odds with your own views. It may be at these times that you need to trust the professionalism of your child's teacher who has more than likely experienced these same challenges before.

5. Ask what you can do

Show your commitment to supporting your child's progress by asking about ways you can best support your child at home.

Keep in mind that everyone wants the same thing - your child to make progress. Student, parent, teacher conferences will be most effective if they are approached with a positive outlook and a collaborative attitude.