



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



### Intermediate Session

Ezekiel 17:22-24

Mark 4:26-34

### Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Creator God,  
open our hearts to receive the seed of the your Word  
and its meaning for our lives today.  
Amen.

### Opening Life Reflection

Choose several kinds of seeds to display, and use the fronts of seed packets or search the Internet to show their corresponding plants. Also use the information on the seed packets (or from the Internet) regarding the length of time it normally takes for the plant to grow. Make sure that the mustard seeds are the smallest seeds on display. (Note: If you cannot find a packet of mustard seeds, look for mustard seed in the spice section of your grocery store.)

Ask the young people to compare and to share any observations about the seeds, their corresponding plants, and the time it takes for the plants to grow. Does anything surprise them?

### Listening to the Word of God

The prophet Ezekiel paints a word picture using the images of planting: the high tree, the lowly tree, the green tree, and the withered tree. The images illustrate how God, in his power and in his goodness, will help his people prosper.

Proclaim Ezekiel 17:22-24.

Allow for silent reflection.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus, too, uses the images of plants to tell a story about smallness, greatness, and the Kingdom of God.

Proclaim the Gospel: Mark 4:26-34.

Allow for silent reflection.

### Scripture Discussion Starters

- What did Jesus say about the mustard seed?



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- What was Jesus comparing the mustard seed to?

### Scripture Background

The early Church community, for whom Mark was writing, was very small. The parable of the mustard seed told by Jesus is meant to encourage the Church community that even though they are small, their efforts will grow and bear fruit for the Kingdom of God.

### Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Who planted the seeds of kindness and helpfulness in your life this past week?
- How did you plant those seeds in the lives of others this past week?

### Doctrinal Discussion Starters

#### The Parables of Jesus

The special name for the type of story Jesus tells in today's Gospel is *parable*. A parable is a simple story told to teach a lesson. In the *parables*, or "simple stories" Jesus told he used everyday objects known to all, such as salt, light, coins, yeast, and even a father and his sons. Jesus wanted people to be able to relate to the stories he told. He wanted everyone to be able to understand his teachings about God, and about how children of God are to live.

- What is the everyday object Jesus used in today's parable? Is it a good choice of object for this parable? Why?
- What is the message, or the lesson of today's parable for each of us?

### Liturgy Connection

Each week we are sent forth from Mass to "glorify the Lord by our lives." Today's parable reminds us that these efforts do not have to be big, headline-making efforts. They are often the small efforts made every day: speaking words of encouragement; helping an elderly neighbor; doing our chores; praying for the sick and for those who are in need; and keeping our promises to others. All of these efforts, combined with the efforts of others, help the Kingdom of God to grow and the Church to stand as a witness of God's light, truth, love, and shelter for all.

### The Gospel in Life

Every day we have the opportunity to plant small seeds of kindness, helpfulness, and love in the lives of others. In doing so, we are living as disciples of Jesus. What one seed will you plant at home this week? Take a moment of quiet to ask God to help you plant this seed, and to help this seed grow.