

## FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS

MARK 4:26-34



Their future doesn't look very promising. After all, Jesus and his followers are just a small group of people in a small little corner of Palestine, with few friends among the religious leaders and those in authority, and with a message that doesn't seem to be reaching very far.

So Jesus tries to get the disciples to imagine what the kingdom of God will be like. He uses images, little stories or parables, to paint a picture of God's kingdom and its future growth. His listeners know that the mustard seed is tiny, yet Jesus tells them that from the smallest of seeds comes a tree so large that birds can nest in it. The kingdom of God is like that mustard seed, he says.

A second image makes the same point. The kingdom of God is like the yeast a woman mixes in with flour. A small amount of yeast has a huge effect – it can produce bread for a lot of people. The kingdom of God is like yeast, Jesus tells them.

The message is clear: The kingdom of God may have small, unimpressive beginnings, but like the mustard seed and the yeast, it will grow into something big and have an effect out of all proportion to its humble start. ■

### SAY

**“Lord, help me to hasten the flowering of God's kingdom of justice, peace and love by being a seed, a leaven, in the life of my Church and my community. Amen.”**

### LEARN

The word of God is something alive and active.

All our prayers and good works, no matter how seemingly small, help God's kingdom to flourish.

### PRAY

Pray for missionaries and all who work to sow the seeds of God's kingdom throughout the world. Pray that you also will be an effective missionary of the Gospel.

### REFLECT

These are challenging times for the Church in the West. We know the statistics; we can see with our own eyes how church attendance is falling even as the average age of priests and religious is increasing. The COVID-19 lockdowns of the last 18 months have made matters worse. It is easy to feel down and demoralised.

It can seem like the yeast has lost its power, that the mustard seed is desiccating. We can be tempted to think that the promise Jesus made is not being fulfilled, and that, far from expanding, the kingdom of God is contracting and even dying.

That is why it's so important to hold fast to the promise Jesus made to his disciples, and that he makes to us too. Jesus assures us that the kingdom of God will flourish because it is God's will that it flourishes. And we are called to trust in Jesus. We trust in Jesus by putting our trust in small things and in God's grace.

The Holy Spirit is alive and active. Lots of small things are happening out there that are enabling the kingdom to grow. Many Catholics are looking seriously at what it means to be Church. They know the Church isn't made up just of bishops, priests and religious but of all the People of God. They are thinking about what needs to be done to help promote renewal and new life in the Church, how they can be a seed or a leaven in the lives of others and of their parish community. Just as the kingdom of God grew out of small things, they know that the little things we do, the little acts of love we show, even if they appear insignificant in isolation, can grow into something wonderful. ■

### DO

Think about those who have been a seed, a leaven, in your life, those family members or others who shaped and inspired you to become the person you are. How can you be a seed, a leaven, in the lives of others in these challenging times?

Think about those who feel excluded from or hurt by the Church. How can you be a mustard seed, a gram of yeast, in their lives that transforms and heals and builds up? What might you need to change in your thinking so as to help bring about real growth and transformation in the Church?

## PARISH OF DROMORE

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### Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

All Masses and ceremonies are broadcast live on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/stcolmans](https://www.facebook.com/stcolmans))

#### Sunday masses

All Saints, Ballela: 9.45 am

St Colman's, Dromore: 11.00 am

#### Weekday masses

Mon, Tues, Fri – 9.30 am, St Colman's, Dromore

Thurs – 7.00 pm, All Saints, Ballela

Sat – 10.00 am, St Colman's Dromore, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

#### Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 13: None

Sun 20: None

#### Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 13: Stephen Magee

Sun 20: None

#### Recently Baptised

Freya Warren

Offertory promise collection £550.60

#### Education of Priests collection Sun 20<sup>th</sup> June

We are often asked to pray for vocations to the priesthood. This collection is a concrete way of supporting those who respond to that call. These funds provide them with vital support for their education in seminaries, as they become the future priests of our Diocese.

#### Blessing of Graves

Dromore – Sun 13<sup>th</sup> June 3pm

Ballela – Sun 20<sup>th</sup> June 3pm

In order to comply with guidance for outdoor events and having completed a risk assessment, the Blessings of Graves will take place without a gathering and will be broadcast on the Facebook page at 3.00 pm. We ask families **NOT** to attend at that time but would encourage you to visit the cemeteries at some point on the two Sundays, say a prayer and sprinkle Easter water over your family grave(s).

13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

#### Ballela Community Group

Are pleased to announce that we will be holding a **Treasure Hunt with Afternoon tea, Sun 27<sup>th</sup> June 2-4pm**. We will be having our afternoon tea in the school or weather permitting we can set tables up outside and all three rooms will be set up with 4 tables so we can space everyone out. If you wish to take part in the Treasure Hunt but do not want to stay for tea you can bring a box with you and we will fill it with delicious homemade scones, tray bakes and buns. If you wish to just come along for Afternoon tea and do not want to take part in the Treasure Hunt you will be very welcome. Admission is £5 per Adult and children are Free.

#### DROMORE DIOCESAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021: @7:30pm** The Society will host an online lecture by **Anthony Russell** entitled **"John Mitchel – Less revolutionary than the average English shopkeeper"**.

Access to the event will be available from 7:20pm with a start at 7:30pm sharp. **A link to the talk can be obtained by e-mailing** the Hon Secretary [goss.ijm@gmail.com](mailto:goss.ijm@gmail.com) and will be forwarded on Monday JUNE 14<sup>th</sup>

#### Lough Derg 2021

Lough Derg regrets that it will not be possible in 2021 to reopen Station Island for the Traditional Three Day Pilgrimage or even for the autumn programme of Day Retreats. Lough Derg will again offer the opportunity to **"Do Lough Derg from wherever you are"** on 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> July. The outdoor **Pilgrimage on the Lough Shore Pilgrim Path** will also be available as the summer goes on. Further information from Lough Derg office 0(0353) 71 9861518 or [www.loughderg.org](http://www.loughderg.org).

#### Ballela Church Clean up

Clean up around the Church grounds will take place on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June from 6.30pm onwards**. If you can help out for an hour or two we would be very grateful.