

Ordinary Time 11B 2015

“He Knows Not How”

As we grow older, all us look back from time to time and marvel at all that has happened in our life. “How did it all happen? When did it happen?” we ask. A husband and wife look back at their married life with wonder, aware that what has happened is beyond anything they could have imagined as newlyweds. Yes, there is something mysterious about our lives that we cannot quantify. Our lives are a mystery because God is always at work in our lives.

The prophet Ezekiel understood the mysterious ways in which God was at work in the life of his people. Living at a time when his people were in exile, far from their own land, Ezekiel told a parable about the mysterious restoration of God’s people to the land of Israel. Like Ezekiel, Jesus understood the mysterious ways in which God was at work in his life and ministry.

Preaching the word of the kingdom day after day, Jesus compared his ministry to a farmer sowing seed day after day. At first, it seems nothing is happening; nothing is taking root; no one is listening. But then, one day, the word of the kingdom begins to bear fruit, and the kingdom starts to make its appearance.

God works in a similar way in our lives. There are moments it seems we are laboring in vain. We proclaim the gospel, but no one is listening. We proclaim the gospel, but we do not see any results. We proclaim the gospel, but it seems

everyone us ignoring our message. But then one day, without our knowing how, the seed we planted bears fruit. The gospel we proclaimed comes to maturity. The kingdom of God begins to make its appearance, and we know not how.

We know not how because God is mysteriously at work in our lives. We do not know how because God's Word always accomplishes its purpose. We do not know how because the kingdom of God makes its appearance despite every human obstacle.

Today's gospel fills us with hope and confidence because it reminds us that the kingdom is *God's* work; it is *God's* kingdom not our kingdom. We plant the seed, but God gives the growth. We water the field, but God gives the growth. God lays the foundation, and we build. This is why we live by faith and not by sight, as St. Paul says. We may not see the fruit of our labor, but our labor is never in vain if we are united with Christ.

Do not be discouraged, then, when others reject the gospel; do not be afraid. Never, ever, be ashamed of your Catholic faith, even when it appears that the word of God has failed. Do not lose faith. For in God's way, in God's time, the Word of God will bear its fruit. And on that day, we will look back in amazement and ask how did it happen? When did it happen? How did the kingdom of God make such a powerful appearance in the world, in the church, in my life?