

Daffodil Day is just one common example of how the seed of HOPE has been planted. People have continued to support this project for many years and, even though they may not see the result of their individual donations, it demonstrates very profoundly how the “mustard seed” of HOPE can grow into something very significant.

Question: Can you recall any other examples of how from a small seed something bigger has developed?

Blessed Mary MacKillop was such a wonderful example of grace, vision, faith and above all determination that allowed the children who were poor to have the freedom that comes from a good education. Mary had a dream. She wanted all children, especially the poor, to have the opportunities and richness that comes from within, when people love one another.

From the parable of this small mustard seed Mary grew a religious community that put into practice the teaching of Christ Himself and gave practical meaning to our Lord’s commandment to “love one another as I have loved you”.

Closing Prayer

Lord,
You ask us to open our eyes to the needs of your people around the world, when all we want to do is to look away.
You ask us to hear the cries of your people, when all we want to do is turn away.
You ask us to speak for those who have no voice, when it would be easier to be silent.
You ask us to work to change the structures that imprison us all.
Open our hearts so we have the courage to do your work and help us to realise that we are your eyes, your ears, your voice and your hands.
Amen.

South Lismore Group

Josephite Associates Prayer Reflection August 2007

Gathering

Place a candle in your sacred space and ask those present to be still for the presence of the Lord.

Opening Prayer

Lord, we thank you for this opportunity to gather again in your presence as Associates of St Joseph.
As people of God, we ask that we may follow the dream and charism of Blessed Mary MacKillop to live our vocation with a pure heart and a true love of God in all our daily lives. Heavenly Father, be with each Associate, whether present in body or spirit, and especially bless those who are burdened with illness or worry, for they are the ones Blessed Mary would have us care for.
We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: Our Chosen One (Tony Sattler)

You’re a sister of the Southern Cross
you calm the troubled sea.
You’re the spirit of the outback
I know you’re here with me.
You’re the bright star in the night sky
shining over me.

Refrain

*Mary MacKillop, Mary MacKillop
child of the sun,
Mary MacKillop, Mary MacKillop
our chosen one.*

You're the rainbow over Uluru
an opal in the snow.
You're the restless wind in spinifex
you're moonlight's silver glow.
You're God's smile on the dreamtime land
watching over me.

You heard the children calling
calling out your name.
You gave your love so freely
and Blessed you became.

Our Australian saint,
our Australian saint.
Mary, Mary,
our Australian saint.

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Gospel Reading: Mark 4: 30 – 32

“What shall we say the Kingdom of God is like?” asked Jesus.
“What parable shall we use to explain it? It is like this. A man takes a mustard seed, the smallest seed in the word, and plants it in the ground. After a while it grows up and becomes the biggest of all plants. It puts out such large branches the birds come and make their nests in its shade.”

Jesus continues, to say that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed, which is small in itself but grows into a large shrub. The parable seems to be that goodness, which is the mark of the Heavenly Kingdom, can seem to be insignificant but has a power out of all proportions to its size. When mature, it makes a notable contribution to our life. This truth is a consolation when our small efforts lead us to doubt our witness and our mission.

Reflection

Some school boys of 50 years ago put on a dinner for their old teacher. After the dinner one of the lads came up to his former teacher and said, “I want to thank you, Brother, for changing my life.”

The Brother was at a loss to recall anything he might have said or done which could have had that effect. However, he remembered the man before him as a boy 50 years ago, a shy, somewhat withdrawn, unassertive lad, a new Australian in the terminology of those times. Now here he was, obviously on top of his work and his life. The Brother said, “Mario, I can't remember how I may have helped you.”

Mario, reliving the moment, replied, “When I was leaving school to begin work, you spoke to me, saying, “Mario, whatever you put into your hand you'll make a success of it”. That gave me a tremendous lift and from then on I faced the world with confidence. I became a builder and not only succeeded financially but have enjoyed every day of my working life.” A good word can go a long way.

This diminutive parable of the mustard seed, demonstrates just how something small can grow into something very significant.

Question: Have you had someone “plant a mustard seed” within your own life?

Question: Have you personally been told that you have given hope to someone through your own words or deeds?

Some gesture, as simple as a smile or acknowledgement of another's presence when we walk down the street, can be very powerful and uplifting to that person, who may be sad or lonely. We all like to be acknowledged and this small act of kindness may sow the seed of HOPE as they continue their journey.