

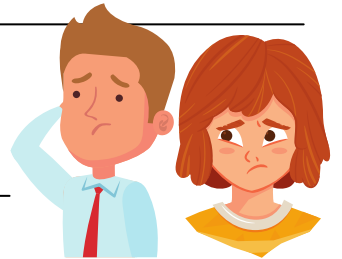


"A FUTURE NOT OUR OWN"



WHAT GIFTS OR TALENTS DO YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO USE FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS?

WHAT HOLDS YOU BACK FROM USING THEM?



READ THE FOLLOWING REFLECTION: "A FUTURE NOT OUR OWN"

*It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.*

*Nothing we do is complete,
which is another way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.*

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No programme accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

That is what we are about.

We plant a seed that will one day grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

*It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.*

*We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.*

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.



This is often attributed to Archbishop Oscar Romero, but composed by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw

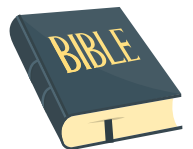
"A FUTURE NOT OUR OWN"

RESPOND IN A PERSONAL WAY TO THIS REFLECTION: DOES THIS ENCOURAGE YOU? CHALLENGE YOU? INSPIRE YOU? CONFUSE YOU? MOTIVATE YOU? WHAT PART STANDS OUT? EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER



THE WORD OF THE LORD...

Sometimes we might feel like we are not able to make change in the world; we might feel our voice can never be heard, or that we don't have anything worth contributing; we might even feel we lack the skills and the courage to really make a difference for others and for ourselves. Mark 4:26-34 reminds us that our apparent smallness or our weakness is not a stumbling block. At our Baptism, a seed of faith was planted in our hearts. That's a seed that needs to be nurtured and watered. Even though the mustard seed is so tiny, it grows into a substantial bush and the birds of the air can shelter in its shade. If we trust in God, if we try to do His Will in our lives, if we nurture our faith through prayer, and the sacraments, through "pruning" in confession, through choosing to serve God in the little ways each day, our lives can and will make a difference. We might not see the fruits of that ourselves, but that doesn't matter. We're called, as Christians, to build up the Kingdom of God. There's only one way we can do that, and that's to blossom where we are planted, in our own situations, with the people in our lives, with the choices we make each day. *How are you going to nurture the seed of your faith this week?*



WATCH: HOW TO KEEP YOUR FAITH ALIVE AND GROWING (FR MIKE SCHMITZ)

LOOKING AT THE WEEK AHEAD, WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD UP THE KINGDOM OF GOD? REMEMBER, EVEN A TINY MUSTARD SEED CAN GROW INTO A GREAT BUSH! WHAT WILL BE INVOLVED IN THAT?



TAKE SOME QUIET TIME, TO REFLECT AND PRAY: YOU MIGHT LIKE TO RE-READ THE REFLECTION, OR TAKE SOME TIME REFLECTING ON MARK 4:26-34, OR PRAY IN YOUR OWN WORDS FOR HELP AND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR WEEK AHEAD.



A Future Not My Own (Matt Maher)

Build Your Kingdom Here (Rend Collective)

Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly (Pat Barrett)

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

