

JANUARY 27, 2021  
Wednesday of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Week in OT  
Mark 4: 1-20

“LISTEN, LEARN AND UNDERSTAND.”

Failures and disappointments can lead us to despair and discouragement. When we experienced that, we want to stop, and it seems we have no strength to continue. Our gospel and parable for today, gives us encouraging words to continue what we are doing inspite of many obstacles, frustrations, and failures. “As Mark has been reporting public ministry prior to this parable, Jesus and his disciples have met many difficulties and obstacles. The religious leaders have accused them of breaking the Sabbath. They even have claimed that Jesus heals by the power of Satan. Jesus’ own relatives wanted to confine him to the house because of they feared he had lost the run of himself. That was the context for Jesus talking about the farmer sowing his seed in the field. The Galilean farmer had all kinds of obstacles to deal with, so that many of the seeds he sows never takes root, or never reaches maturity. Yet, in spite of all obstacles and setbacks, the harvest turns out to be great. The message is, surely, “Look beyond the obstacles, the set-backs, the disappointments; God is at work in my ministry and the harvest will be great in the end.” We can all become absorbed by what is not going well, by the failures, the losses all around us. The parable encourages us to keep hopeful in the midst of loss and failure, because the Lord is always a work in a life-giving way even when failure and loss seem to dominate the landscape.”<sup>1</sup>

My brothers and sisters, the Lord is telling us today to continue what we are doing for the Kingdom of God, don’t focus on our failures but set our hearts on God the One who will give us strength as we struggle and face the challenges down the road. We are all stewards of God; we do our best God will do the rest. In the end, we can say, like St. Paul, “I planted the seed and Apollos watered it, God made it grow.”<sup>2</sup> So, just open our minds and heart, listen, learn, and understand to bear fruit, thirty, and sixty, and a hundredfold.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie](http://www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie)

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor 3:6 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA