

Lent 2010



Lenten Meditation # 4 - (Third Sunday in Lent)

LENTEN GARDENS "GREAT EXPECTATIONS"

In thinking about gardens during the Lenten season, we come to a parable of Jesus that concerns not a whole garden but one plant within it. Leave plenty of room for this plant! Its seeds are tiny, but the plant can grow, in old terms, "to the height of a horse and rider". It is, of course, the mustard seed, an herb, a condiment, seasoning that adds spice to life. Jesus said, "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here' and it will do so (Matthew 17:20). He also uses this symbol for the growth of his whole mission: "The Kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed - smallest of all seeds, but when grown it becomes a tree and birds make nests in its branches" (Matthew 13:31-32).

Creative use of the season of Lent can be like planting a mustard seed. Each of us has so much more potential than we ever realize and Lent is a time for considering how we can live more fully. It might be said that Jesus is the only person in history, who lived up to his full potential. Even if we cannot measure up to his example, his life is a wonderful guide for us in terms of trust in God, understanding of life's meaning and heartfelt compassion for those around us.

But Lent is also a time when the Church, Christ's worldwide family, celebrates. Christ's followers are called to bring the reign of God into fulfillment. Jesus did not come simply for his twelve disciples or even for the hundreds, who heard him preach on a hillside. His message and his life are the mustard seed that can grow and spread throughout the earth. If individual faith and practice are often short of our potential, so is the vision and outreach of Christ's church. We have "a story to tell to the nations". It is not only a story of Jesus, but an insight into the abundant life God offers us. Through faith and through following in the way Jesus has led, our world could become so much greater. Lent calls us to great expectations both for ourselves and for our world.

