



Things to Ponder

- [About the Author](#)
- [Order](#)
- [About the Book](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Readers' Comments](#)
- [News & Events](#)
- [A Prayer for the Day](#)
- [Things To Shout Out!](#)
- [Things to Ponder](#)
- [My Favorite Quotes](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Home](#)

Things to Ponder for Sunday June 10 & 17, 2018

[\(See Posting for June 17 below\)](#)

One Thing

By Judi Moreo

Ever feel like everything in your life is out of control and dealing with it all is completely overwhelming? Most of us have. For many of us, it is because somewhere along the line, for reasons of which we may or may not be aware, clutter has crept into our lives. It has stealthily invaded our homes, our offices, our cars and our minds. It is so much a part of our everyday life, we no longer recognize it as the intruder and enemy it is.

We all have clothes we no longer wear, recipes torn out of magazines we've never cooked, papers we need to look at, file or throw away but haven't. We also have old beliefs about ourselves, ideas that no longer serve us, other people's opinions and the daily news cluttering our minds. No wonder we can't find the time or energy to do the things we want to do and feel overwhelmed. We become paralyzed by our clutter.

Ideally, our homes should reflect our own peaceful, joyful spirits. Unfortunately, most of us have minds cluttered with tensions, fears and disappointments. The clutter in our lives reflects our own inner turmoil.

There is good news, however, for the chronically over-cluttered, over-worked and over-whelmed. We can change the status quo in our lives. It is possible to find our way out of the maze of clutter and make a clean, fresh start. It begins by making a conscious decision to do ONE thing; to throw away, donate or sell ONE thing; to let go of ONE idea. When we have done that, it is easier to do ONE MORE. It may take time, but a commitment to changing our thinking and habits can lead to an organized, comfortable and clutter free existence.

The bonus is that it also leads to a more peaceful, joyful and successful life...one day, one thought, one thing at a time.

Things to Ponder for Sunday, June 17, 2018

Great Oaks from Little Acorns Spring (Based on Mark 4:26-34)

By Rev. Msgr. Kevin T. Hart

"Great oaks from little acorns spring," as the saying goes. This aphorism sums up today's Gospel (Mark 4:26-34) on Jesus' parable of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is not another term for heaven, but for the reign of God, when all the world will accept the will of God, and when God's will is done as perfectly on earth as it is in heaven. This is the aim and goal of God for the entire universe.

Although the parable is short, it contains three important truths. First, it tells of the utter helplessness of man. The farmer does not make the seed grow; he does not even understand how it grows. It has the secret of life and of growth within itself. We can never really create anything in the full and literal sense of the term. We can discover things; we can rearrange them; we can develop them, but to create them we cannot. We do not create the Kingdom of God, for the Kingdom is God's. It is true that we can frustrate and hinder it. We can also make a situation in our immediate world where it is given an opportunity to come more fully and more speedily.

Second, in comparing the growth and development of the Kingdom to nature, Jesus reminds us that the growth of the kingdom, like the growth in nature, is often imperceptible. We cannot see a plant growing. It is only if we look at it after some interval of time that we notice the growth. If we look at it every day we cannot see the growth taking place. It is only if we go away and then come back after an interval of time that we can see the difference. So it is with the Kingdom. We may not notice a change in the Kingdom of God in our immediate world, but if we, say, go on a retreat and think back over the past year of our lives, than we can notice a difference.

Although the growth of the Kingdom may be imperceptible, it is nevertheless, as in nature, constant. Night and day, while we sleep, growth goes on. The trouble with our growing the Kingdom is that we are sometimes spasmodic: one day we take a step forward, the next day we take two steps back. But the work of God goes on quietly and God unceasingly unfolds his plan.

Nature's growth is inevitable. There is nothing as powerful as growth. A tree can split a concrete pavement. A weed can push its green head through an asphalt path. Nothing can stop growth. So it is with the Kingdom: in spite of our rebelliousness and disobedience, God's work goes on. In the end, nothing can stop the purposes of God.

Third, Jesus reminds us that while God creates the Kingdom, we do have a role to play in developing it, a double role. First, if the Kingdom of God is people, then we are the seeds that He has sown. Quietly, patiently, imperceptibly, constantly and inevitably God unfolds within us the growth of His Kingdom. We need to mirror God's patience, our patience with Him as well as with ourselves. We cannot let our human weaknesses get us down. He gives us His own Son in the Eucharist, and He is quick to forgive our failures to grow into the Kingdom of God. With that patience, with the Eucharist, with His forgiveness come hope, the hope that God is so much

more powerful than we are, and that He will bring to fulfillment the good work He has begun in us.

Second, we are also the sower. Our striving to live our true selves has an effect on others. Our good example, our ability to cope with disappointments, our fervent reception of the Eucharist and our constant turning to Jesus for forgiveness can open the hearts of our family, neighbors and co-workers so that the Lord can bring them along with us on that journey to the Kingdom. Our faith may be as small as a mustard seed, but just such seeds can hasten the inevitable flourishing of the Kingdom

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