

The past couple of years I've been trying my hand at gardening a bit. I'm not any sort of connoisseur of plants or flowers or vegetables. My idea of gardening is seeing what's on sale; and if nothing's on sale - then picking up whatever is cheapest in the garden section at Walmart or Meijer.

My parent's yard is also a good source of free stuff for the garden. A few years back my mother and I dug up a bunch of iris bulbs and relocated them. Those things multiply like crazy. I took a bunch and planted them around the parish where I was assigned then. This spring, she and I dug up some rose of sharon from her garden, and I planted them around a courtyard at the cathedral rectory.

The great thing about irises and rose of sharon is - to quote my mother - "they're weeds ... you can't kill them!" Which is very good news for me.

This year, too, I'm trying my hand at seeds. I planted a bunch of perennial and annual seeds. Don't ask me what they are - I lost track of what was where and then accidentally threw out the seed packets when I was cleaning up.

I don't know if buying cheap seeds was a mistake; or if maybe it's just been too cold this year; maybe I'm not watering enough - maybe I'm watering too much; or maybe it's the sand and clay mix that seems to be in the yard in Saginaw ... but everything sure seems to be coming along very, very slowly ... so slowly that at times it seems that all I'm doing is making mud, getting dirty, and growing weeds.

In today's Gospel, we here two of the three "Seed Parables" from St. Mark.

Now, this doesn't represent the gardening phase of Jesus' ministry; nor is it meant to be a treatise on farming.

Most likely, Jesus' listeners were very familiar with gardening and farming; planting; growing; and harvesting.

Rather, the focus of Jesus' parables is the Kingdom of God and our life in the kingdom.

When a child is born into the world - we have no idea what the future holds. Will the child be the next Einstein or Marie Curie? Or God forbid, the next Atilla the Hun or Madam Mao Tse Tung?

Only God knows what the child will be capable of; and what they may accomplish in their life. Should they live to a ripe old age or live only a few years. The same holds true for a community. Things change, people come and go ... and no one really knows what God has planned for the future.

Similarly, when we are baptized into the life of the Trinity - how God's grace may grow in our lives; how God's love might transform us - remains to be seen as we live it out in our lives. It's a bit like the old saying: "Small acorns grow into mighty oaks."

Just like my muddy garden filled with unidentified seeds and plants from the sale rack at Walmart. The Kingdom of God comes along at its own pace. God's time is not our time. God's will is not always our will. What might at first look like something insignificant may in fact turn out to be very important - but only time will tell. But the Kingdom of God will continue to endure and grow.

As we approach this altar to receive the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ - let us pray for a deepening of our Faith - to persevere with courage in the face of the unknown. And as God's plan for us is slowly revealed, may we express our gratitude ... our gratitude to Him ... for the many gifts we have received and will receive.