

[Spirituality](#)

[Pencil Preaching](#)



by Pat Marrin

[View Author Profile](#)

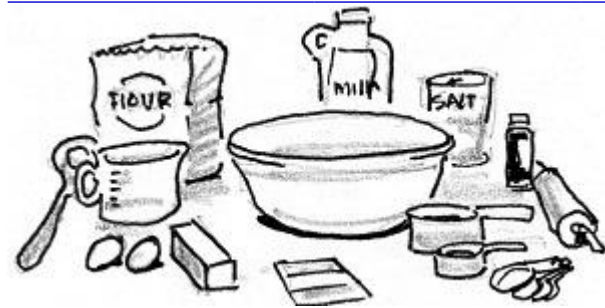
[patrickjmarrin@gmail.com](mailto:patrickjmarrin@gmail.com).

## [\*\*Join the Conversation\*\*](#)

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. [Learn more](#)

October 28, 2019

[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)



“We know that all of creation is groaning in labor pains” (Rom 8:22).

St. Paul’s powerful imagery describing the longing evident in creation to advance to glory in Christ takes on new and urgent meaning in our time of climate change. The travail of birth pangs is not just about new life, but about survival itself. Have we failed our own planet to the point of destroying it and all human hope with it? Will

the future be still birthed by the toxic trashing of our common home to satisfy the blind pursuit of wealth and convenience by the few at the expense of the many?

Nature's retreat in the northern hemisphere into the colder, darker seasons of fall and winter is a chilling reminder of how a slightly altered distance from the sun puts the earth to sleep. Yet even this annual reprieve is only to let half the globe lie fallow for a time before the surge of spring awakens it to another outpouring of abundance. Nature is our most precious parable, teaching us how to be wise stewards and never to take God's gifts for granted.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells two brief parables about the power of life to give life. The mustard seed, the smallest of all the seeds, bursts into abundance when sown into the wind. Once rooted, it springs up to provide shade and shelter for the birds, more life multiplying itself in countless ways. The smallest gesture of kindness given freely can circumnavigate the globe as it is paid forward.

A woman takes a lump of yeast, mixes it with flour, salt, oil and water, and it blossoms into fragrant loaves enough to feed a village. Yeast also gave the world beer and wine to grace weddings, music, dancing and human joy, with children and every kind of creativity to multiply hope for a future renewed by peace and love.

Once in a brutal unjust, world, the Gospel arrived just in time to offer a different way forward. The Word of God is alive in us, making us parables to the world, like mustard seeds and yeast ready to be multiplied and shared.

Advertisement