

**We are the sons and daughters of God the farmer who sows the seed of his Word in our Hearts. 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Isaiah 55:10-11, Romans 8:18-23, Matthew 13:1-23)**

There is a story I came across in the book entitled, “the sower, the seed and the soil.” It tells of a young man who told his mother he wanted to leave the house to go and see the world. Refusing to listen to his mother’s advice to stay home, he took all his wealth but before he left his mother gave him a bible telling him, “Son take this, it may help you in your journey.” Some years later the old mother saw her son coming back home looking so bad and dejected. He told his mother, “Mom, life had been so hard on me!” The mother asked about the bible she gave him, and the son said, “that is all that I have left.” The mother collected the Bible from him, opened it and said, “I told you this bible will help you, but you didn’t read it. The money I left for you is still in it. I left \$1000 by **Psalm 23**, I left \$1000 by **Romans 8:28** and I left \$1000 by **Philippians 4:19**.

Brothers and sisters, on this 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in ordinary time, the readings for the liturgy focus on the importance of God’s Word presented in the form of parables. In the next several Sundays, we will be hearing a lot more parables from Jesus. Our first parable on God’s Word is presented in our first reading from final chapter of Second Isaiah also called the Book of Consolation. The prophet Isaiah uses a common occurrence of rain to illustrate the glory of God’s Word. Earlier in Isaiah 40:8, the prophet says, “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand for ever.” The prophet compares the word of God to rain and snow that fall on the ground: “As the rain and snow come down from heavens and do not return without watering the earth...so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty without carrying out my will and succeeding...”

God mentions five things that his rain does after it comes down: it waters the earth, it makes it bring forth, it makes it sprout, it gives seed to the sower and it gives bread to the eater. So, Isaiah in effect describes God as a farmer who sows his word in us to give us fertility and fruitfulness. Our responsorial Psalm from Psalm 65 says we are the sons and daughters of God the farmer who provides for the earth, drenches its furrows, softens it with rain and blesses its growth. St. Paul in our 2<sup>nd</sup> reading also compares God's word to God's creation. He says sowing in creation is always difficult, it is a time of pain and groaning, but it is also the beginning of new life. He says the suffering of this present time like the act of sowing the seed cannot be compared with the future glory to come.

Today's gospel from Matthew tells us that Jesus now sits in a boat teaching the crowd by the sea. It is from the insecure situation from the boat that Jesus gives a series of his parables and today he begins by giving us the parable of the sower. William Barclay says, as Jesus was talking, he saw a sower busy sowing seed in the fields beside the lake. Jesus seeing this said, "Look around you and see the sower went out to sow." We realize that each of us have hearts that are complicated as it happened that some seeds fell on the path, stony ground, thorny ground and then on good soil. Fortunately, Jesus himself gives a very good interpretation of the parable but my focus is on the farmer or the sower. He is never discouraged in spite of some failures.

The parable describes three failures of sowing: the seed on the path is devoured by birds; the seed sown on rocky ground is scorched by the sun because it has no roots; and the seed sown among thorns is choked. The sower continues to sow the seeds even though he knows some seeds will not germinate. The sower is not discouraged in sowing the seed even though he knows not all the seeds will bear fruits. In a similar way, God continues to give us his word even though he knows not all of us will accept it. God the Farmer is never discouraged and does

not give up sowing the seed of the word of God in us every day. Perhaps this week we may have to examine our relationship with the Word of God which his ministers sow in our hearts every day. **Amen.**

**By Fr. Emmanuel Subaar**