



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, CYCLE A

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But some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.. Matt 13:8

Taking the shorter form of the Sunday Gospel text is rarely recommended. However, in this case, it has been intentionally chosen for this week's reflection. The short form relates the Parable of the Sower [of the *Seeds of Contemplation*] in what scripture scholars believe is likely the original form from the Oral Tradition.

Seeds of Contemplation: In *Lectio Divina*, our hearing is purified in three stages: hearing the Word (*Lectio*) we leave the mortal world "crowd" and are drawn to Jesus; in reflecting on the Word (*Meditatio*) we are awestruck by His humility and mercy; and in prayer (*Oratio*), we are surrounded by His intimacy and desire quietude. This *sowing of the seeds* process clarifies our spiritual senses as the seed is sown closer and closer to "rich soil", where our interior life is infused with His glory "*in the hearing.*" (See Luke 4:21) For this to happen our heart must become hungry for the truth and nourishment only Jesus can give. This hunger is the effect of the *Seeds of Contemplation* sown in *Lectio Divina*. This hunger, then, by necessity calls us to an ascetic disciplined life of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, guiding us along the Pilgrims Way of the Cross toward interior Illumination and Mystical Union.

For reflection this week, this shorter Gospel form allows a less distracted pathway conducive to the rising of the heart and mind to "*Kairos,*" that perfect timeless moment beyond the bounds of time. It is here in sacred celebration of the Kingdom of God here on earth that we experience spiritual growth, and settle in quietude within the sanctuary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Despite all the obstacles depicted that might otherwise obstruct our spiritual journey i.e. "*rocky ground,*" the Word of God in *Lectio Divina* will bear fruit, and will bear fruit in amazing abundance. This parable clearly reflects Jesus' own experience of the obstacles that daily were set by the Evil One to try to obstruct His ministry. Yet His *sowing of the seeds* in Word and deed bears fruit, and bears it in abundance, (*a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold... Matt 13:8*)

For us, overcoming the obstacles where some of the *seeds of contemplation* fall on the path, some on rocky ground, and some among thorns, we thirst for the River of Life flowing from the pierced side of Jesus, knowing that, through grace, "*some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.*" *Matt 13:8* We are once again cleansed in the waters of life as it pours into the source, summit and fountain of His Church and our mystical life. The more we crave spiritual thirst for faith, the deeper this fountain of life is filled. It is here that we draw from its overflowing grace. The *seeds of contemplation* help us rise to the mystical Church, where we join the disciples who were true mystics, initiated by Our Lord who welcomes us with His heart of mercy.

In reflection, consider the Grace of the Holy Spirit that incarnates within our very flesh as we rise along our journey to the New Jerusalem. May we become for others the good fruit-bearing soil. May we, through his Grace, be Christ for others, as He expands His reign, drawing in those that go astray, so that they might return to the path leading to the rich soil, where God in his goodness will surely bless them in abundance.

The Seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest. Luke 8:8

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea.
Such large crowds gathered around him
that he got into a boat and sat down,
and the whole crowd stood along the shore.
And he spoke to them at length in parables, saying:

"A sower went out to sow.

*And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path,
and birds came and ate it up.*

Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil.

*It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep,
and when the sun rose it was scorched,
and it withered for lack of roots.*

Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it.

*But some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit,
a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.*

Whoever has ears ought to hear."

The Gospel of the Lord