

Reflection for the 15th Sunday of Ordinary Time

This Sunday the 15th Sunday of Ordinary Time our Gospel reading is taken from the Gospel of Matthew and the reading is Jesus speaking to a large crowd and he tells them the Parable of the “*Sower*.” This Parable is also in the Gospel of Mark and Luke, so all three on the Synoptic Gospels contain the reading that we have this Sunday. Also, this is one of the few Parables that Jesus explains the meaning of the Parable to His Disciples.

The parable speaks of a sower throwing seeds that lands on four different types of soil. The first soil that the seeds fell on was a path, in this soil the seeds were eaten by birds. This is a person who hears the word of the Kingdom of God without understanding it, and then the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in the person’s heart. Next the seed is sown on rocky ground, this seed has little soil, so it quickly grows, but when the sun rises it is scorched and withers for lack of roots. This is a person who hears the word of God and receives it at once with great joy. But soon trials and tribulations come along and the person loses his or her faith due to the lack of a deep faith. Next some seed falls among thorns, and the thorns grow up and choke out the seed. This is a person who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches prevent the seed from bearing any fruit. Finally, some seed falls on rich soil and it produces a harvest of a hundred, or sixty, or thirtyfold. This is a person who hears the word and understands it and the person bears great fruit.

In doing research for this reflection I googled “*Parable of the Sower*” it was amazing to see that I received 1,470,000 items from this search. To me that is utterly amazing that a search of the “*Parable of the Sower*” would turn up over one million results. Of course, the results were varied, ranging from seeds to plant to a book with the title of Parable of the Sower, that had little to nothing to do with the parable that Jesus told about a sower scattering seeds. But it is interesting to think about how this parable is connected to so many different things.

The point of the parable is that the seeds of faith are scattered and all have an opportunity to embrace the faith that gives new life. It would be natural for someone to read or hear the *Parable of the Sower* and think that the sower in the Parable is just randomly scattering seed and it is all just left up to chance that the seed will fall on good soil and produce an abundant harvest. If we are thinking that way it might make sense to think of the farmer who takes the time to till the soil, and prepare it for planting. With all the effort that the farmer makes to have the soil ready for the seed, there will still be places on the farmer’s land that does not have rich soil that produces an abundant harvest. It is also the same for Christ, from the beginning of our lives in this world our loving God has been reaching out to us preparing us to receive the seed of faith and produce an abundant harvest. For each one of us to produce an abundant harvest of faith we must be receptive to the word and allow our lives to be changed by the seed of faith. This seed of faith is given to us through the teachings of the Church, the Sacraments of our Faith and Sacred Scriptures.