

Friday 16th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 13,18-23): Jesus said to his disciples, «Now listen to the parable of the sower. When a person hears the message of the Kingdom but without taking it to himself, the devil comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed that fell along the footpath. The seed that fell on rocky ground stands for the one who hears the word and accepts it at once with joy. But this fickle and has no roots. No sooner is he harassed or persecuted because of the word, than he gives up. The seed that fell among the thistles is the one who hears the word, but then the worries of this life and the love of money choke the word, and it does not bear fruit. As for the seed that fell on good soil it is the one who hears the word and under-stands it; this bears fruit and produces a hundred, or sixty, or thirty times more».

«Now listen to the parable of the sower»

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Today, we contemplate God as a good and magnanimous farmer, who has so richly sown his field. He has not spared anything for the redemption of man; He has vested everything in his own Son Jesus Christ who, as the seed sown in the good soil (death and burial), with his saint Resurrection has become our own life and resurrection.

God is a farmer who knows how to wait. Time belongs to the Father, for He is the only one to know about the day or the hour (cf. Mk 13:32) of the harvest and threshing. And God waits. And we must also wait while synchronizing the watch of our hopes with God's design of salvation. St. James says: «See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains» (Jas 5:7). God waits on the crop that grows thanks to his grace. And we must also stay on our toes; we must collaborate with God's grace by giving him our cooperation and opposing no obstacles to this transforming action of God.

God's crop, which here on earth, grows and bears fruit, is a feat visible through its effects; we can see them in actual miracles and in clamorous examples of saintliness of life. There are plenty of people that after having heard all the words and din of this world are hungry and thirsty for the authentic Word of God, wherever it is, alive and incarnated. There are thousands who live their belonging to Jesus Christ and to the Church with the same enthusiasm than in the first times of the Gospel, because the divine word «finds the soil where to germinate and bear fruit» (St. Augustine); we must therefore raise our morale and look at our future with the eyes of the faith.

The success of the crop does not depend upon our human strategies or upon our marketing techniques, but upon God's initiative of salvation “rich in mercy” and upon the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, that can transform our lives so we can bear the delicious fruits of charity and of contagious joy.