

Friday of the Sixteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 13:18-23): Jesus said to his disciples: “Hear the parable of the sower. The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the Kingdom without understanding it, and the Evil One comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.”

“Hear the parable of the sower”

Fr. Josep LAPLANA OSB Monk of Montserrat
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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” (James 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.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- ◦ “The good deeds we do are nothing if we are not capable of patiently enduring the evils as well. The more someone rises in perfection, the more the adversity of the world grows against him” (St. Gregory the Great)
- “The Word of God makes a pathway within us. We listen to it with our ears and it passes to our hearts; it does not remain in our ears; it must go to the heart. And from the heart, it passes to the hands, to good deeds.” (Francis)
- “But this ‘intimate and vital bond of man to God’ can be forgotten, overlooked, or even explicitly rejected by man. Such attitudes can have different causes: revolt against evil in the world; religious ignorance or indifference; the cares and riches of this world; the scandal of bad example on the part of believers; currents of thought hostile to religion; finally, that attitude of sinful man which makes him hide from God out of fear and flee his call.” (Catechism Of the Catholic Church, N° 29)