

Wednesday 3rd in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 4,1-20): Jesus began to teach by the lake, but such a large crowd gathered about him that He got into a boat and sat in it on the lake while the crowd stood on the shore. He taught them many things through stories or parables. In his teaching he said, «Listen! The sower went out to sow. As he sowed, some of the seed fell along a path and the birds came and ate it up. Some of the seed fell on rocky ground where it had little soil; it sprang up immediately because it had no depth; but when the sun rose and burned it, it withered because it had no roots. Other seed fell among thornbushes and the thorns grew and choked it, so it didn't produce any grain. But some seed fell on good soil, grew and increased and yielded grain; some produced thirty times as much, others sixty and others one hundred times as much». And Jesus added, «Listen then, if you have ears».

When the crowd went away, some who were around him with the Twelve asked about the parables. He answered them, «The mystery of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But for those outside, everything comes in parables, so that the more they see, they don't perceive; the more they hear, they don't understand; otherwise they would be converted and pardoned».

Jesus said to them, «Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any of the parables? What the sower is sowing is the word. Those along the path where the seed fell are people who hear the word, but as soon as they do, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Other people receive the word like rocky ground. As soon as they hear the word, they accept it with joy, but they have no roots so it lasts only a little while. No

sooner does trouble or persecution come because of the word, than they fall. Others receive the seed as among thorns. After they hear the word, they are caught up in the worries of this life, false hopes of riches and other desires. All these come in and choke the word so that finally it produces nothing. And there are others who receive the word as good soil. They hear the word, take it to heart and produce: some thirty, some sixty and some one hundred times as much».

«What the sower is sowing is the word»

Fr. Antoni CAROL i Hostench
(*Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain*)

Today, we hear our Lord teaching the “Sower's parable”. The example is highly topical. Our Lord is always “sowing”. Lots of people today also listen to Jesus through his Vicar —the Pope—, his ministers and... his faithful laymen and women: Christ has given a share in his priestly mission to all of us, who have been baptized. There is “hunger” for Jesus. Never ever before our Church has been so Catholic, men and women of all races and colors finding cover under its wings all the over the world. He send us all over the world (cf. Mk 16:15) and, despite the shadows of the panorama, this has become true in Jesus Christ's apostolic commandment.

The sea, the boat and the shore have been replaced by stadiums, screens and modern communication and transport means. However, Jesus today is no different than yesterday. Man and his urge to learn how to love have not changed either. Today, there are also some who, more directly, receive and understand the Word — by grace and free divine election, mysteriously... while, on the other hand, there are many who need more descriptive and deliberated explanations of the Revelation.

God, in any case, requests from both of us the fruits of sanctity. The Holy Spirit helps us but not without our personal cooperation. In the first place, diligence is needed. If we half react, that is, if we halt at the “border” of the road without fully going in, we shall be an easy prey for Satan.

Secondly, we need perseverance in prayer —dialogue—, to be able to get a deeper knowledge and love for Jesus Christ: «Saint without praying...? —I do not believe in

this sanctity» (Saint Josemaria Escrivà).

Finally, the spirit of poverty and self-abnegation, will prevent our “suffocating” on the way. It better be clear that: «No one can serve two masters....» (Mt 6:24).

In the Virgin Mary we can find the best model of how to react to the God's call.