

## So, What's Your Point?

**H**ave you ever explained something so carefully and at length, and yet the other person misses your point? This seems to be the situation in today's Gospel. The scene Jesus first described was a familiar one. The people listening to him might have sown seed in this manner themselves. So, what was the point?

First it is important to recall that a parable is a story with a double meaning. One meaning is literal, the other is metaphoric. The literal meaning of this parable is obvious. So, what's the point? It is in the second part of the passage that Jesus explains the metaphoric meaning. He tells his disciples that the seeds represent those who hear the word of the kingdom. Then the reality of life intervenes and each seed (the one who hears the word) must decide how to deal with that reality. One might think: Very interesting story. I know just what the seed is going through.

We are now ready to ask: What's the real point of the story? The metaphoric meaning of the parable should pose several questions for each of us: What yield do I produce? Do I appreciate what it means to be a disciple; or is that privilege far from my consciousness? Am I grounded in my faith, or am I religiously rootless? Do I live according to the standards of Jesus, or do the allure and riches of the world entrap me? That's the point of the story.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

### FOR *Reflection*

- ★ How has the word of the kingdom taken root in your family?
- ★ What yield of goodness do you bring forth in your workplace?



*[Jesus said,] "This is why I speak to them in parables, because 'they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.'"*

MATTHEW 13:13



# Dear Padre,

**Recently my husband's union was involved in a messy strike that nearly turned violent. Does the Catholic Church support strikes like this?**

I grew up in Detroit. Most of my family and extended family worked in the automobile plants there. I clearly remember long strikes when my father was out of work and our family would struggle along, sometimes wondering where we would get money for the necessities of life.

In the past hundred years, many of the writings of the popes and the bishops' conferences have centered on the issues of work, including the issue of receiving a just wage. The Church spoke in support of child-labor laws, eight-hour workdays, organized unions, collective bargaining, and a just wage. Because of this, at times the Church has been labeled unpatriotic, socialistic, and even communist. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published a pastoral letter, "Economic Justice for All," which outlines the six moral principles drawn from Scripture that form the basis of the Church's social teaching. In this letter, the Church fully supports the rights of workers to form unions to secure their rights to fair wages and working conditions. Unions may also legitimately resort to strikes when this is the

only available means to the justice owed the workers (EJA 104–105). The Church draws the line at violence. The strike becomes morally unacceptable when accompanied by violence (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2435).

—Fr. Paul J. Coury, CSSR  
[Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org](mailto:Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org)



SHEILA FITZGERALD/SHUTTERSTOCK

## A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

*Every worker...should have the right to decent remuneration, to social security, and to a pension. Among you here are... workers in grassroots jobs who are excluded from labor rights, who are denied the possibility of unionizing, whose income is neither adequate nor stable. Today I...join my voice to yours and support you in your struggle.*

—WORLD MEETING OF POPULAR MOVEMENTS, OCTOBER 28, 2014



## Calendar

### Monday

JULY 13

Weekday

Is 1:10–17

Mt 10:34–11:1

### Tuesday

JULY 14

St. Kateri Tekakwitha,  
Virgin

Is 7:1–9

Mt 11:20–24

### Wednesday

JULY 15

St. Bonaventure,  
Bishop and Doctor  
of the Church

Is 10:5–7, 13b–16

Mt 11:25–27

### Thursday

JULY 16

Weekday

Is 26:7–9, 12, 16–19

Mt 11:28–30

### Friday

JULY 17

Weekday

Is 38:1–6, 21–22, 7–8

Mt 12:1–8

### Saturday

JULY 18

Weekday

Mi 2:1–5

Mt 12:14–21

### Sunday

JULY 19

Sixteenth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time

Wis 12:13, 16–19

Rom 8:26–27

Mt 13:24–43

or 13:24–30