



15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A – July 16, 2017

There is a story about a priest who showed up late for Mass one Sunday Morning and the people noticed that he was wearing several band aids on his face. After the homily, which was very, very long that day, he felt compelled to tell the people that while he was shaving, he was concentrating on his homily and cut his face. After the Mass, one of the ushers gave him some “friendly” advice. He said, "Father, I have an idea.

Next week concentrate on your face and cut the homily."

There are times when the scripture readings at Mass do not require a long homily, if they ever do. In fact, sometimes the homily gets in the way of the message that God wants us to hear and we get to hear the message the preacher wants us to hear. The Parable of the Sower in the gospel today is one such message. Jesus likens the teaching of God’s word to the sowing of seeds. The seeds fall on different types of soil and Jesus himself explains what it all means.

He speaks about the footpath, the rocky ground, the thorny soil, and the good ground. Each of these kinds of soil represents a type of human heart with which people receive the word of God. The question we need to ask ourselves is, “Which type of soil is me?”

The Parable of the Sower

The Seed is the Word of God



The Path



The Rocky Soil



The Weedy Soil



The Good Soil

What type of Soil are You?

Is God Growing in Your Heart?

Am I like the pathway where the seed cannot even sprout because I don’t care. Or am I like the rocky ground where the seed sprouts but it has no roots. Am I like the thorny ground where the word of God is choked to death by worldly cares and sinful pleasures. Or am I like the good soil in the parable, where the seed bears good fruit – thirty, sixty and one hundred fold.

When we compare different human dispositions to different types of soil we find one crucial difference between us and the ground. The soil cannot help being what it is, but we can. We have the capacity to change.

Isaiah tells us in the first reading today, that the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return without fulfilling the purpose for which they were sent by God. The same is true of God’s word and it should be true of us too. We have been sent by God with a purpose in life. We are here on earth to help each other (Matthew 25:35-40). We are here on earth to love God and love our Neighbor as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:36-40). It’s about the growth of the human spirit, from selfishness to selflessness; from sinner to saint.

St. Paul says that kind of growth requires some labor pains, but we are not to get discouraged because all those things are normal here on earth. If we keep our focus on Jesus we can bear the trials and tribulations of life - and like the rain and the snow, we can fulfill the purpose for which God sent us.

The question for today is this, “How can I improve the disposition of my heart so that the word of God can bear good fruit in my life and bear it more abundantly - 30, 60 and 100 fold?”

We pray today, that when we return to God, we will have fulfilled the purpose for which we have been sent. Reflect today on what that purpose for you is all about.

