

Good Seed, But the Soil...

I. For the next three Sundays we are going to binge watch parables. The first episode is about seeds thrown all over the place. The second is about a showdown between seeds and weeds. The final episode is about buried treasure but no map.

I. When we hear these opening lines, “Once upon a time...”; “When I was your age...”; “Back in my day...”, we know we should either get comfortable or run, because we are going to hear a story. Likely one we have heard before. “A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed...” is how the Lord started his story. He didn’t need a book. The story was all around him as he watched farmers. He is a good teller of stories. He has good guys and bad guys; there is suspense as the story moves to its

conclusion; and of course, surprise endings, when the bad guy becomes a good guy. The farmer who scatters the seed is not the focus of this story. It seems he is not a very good farmer; he doesn’t care where the seeds land or that he guarantees himself a terrible harvest. The *seed* is the primary image in the parable. Parables have only one meaning so the Lord’s focus is on the seed as the Word of the kingdom to be heard and understood. When it is not heard, nothing happens. When the word is heard but not understood, it is quickly lost and the result is the same - no growth. This parable is about “the mystery of the rejection and acceptance of Jesus’ word of the kingdom” [Sacra Pagina, The Gospel of Matthew, Liturgical Press, 1991, p. 197]. It was and still is today, a mystery why some people reject God’s word and others accept it. It’s not simply that

some are “bad guys” and others are the “good guys.” Some of us don’t hear God’s word because we have closed our ears. Others of us hear it and even understand it but because of too many distractions in our lives lose it. Some of us hear, understand *and* bring forth an incredible harvest of the kingdom of God.

Concl. The lesson of parable stories is ours to write. The Lord tells a story that has one meaning and we apply it to our lives. Or not. Are we rocky or thorny ground, not giving the seeds any chance? Or good ground that we welcome the seeds of God’s Word? Sometimes the seeds fall on us when we are “bad ground” *but even then* they can be the hope we need to come back to life. Like the images of rain and snow in the first reading, the seed, the Word is a gift from God whose purpose is to encourage our

growth toward Him. It is not the seeds’ fault if nothing grows. God scatters *good* seeds and when he scatters, he throws it *everywhere*. Even on ground where the odds are against anything taking root. We have probably marveled at some plant at our house that won’t die. We have seen pictures of trees and bushes growing stubbornly out of rocky ground on the side of a mountain or in the middle of the desert. They have to be tenacious to find the minimal amount of soil and water to survive. Are *we* that tenacious with the Word of God that falls on us?

[First Communion: The seed of God is now nourished by the Communion you receive today.]

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