

The Work of the People
The Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

We are half way through the month of July and half way through the opportunity for a summer activity even though this year it may be very limited. Liturgically, July is the month of the Precious Blood of Christ. "As we now approach the feast and month devoted to honoring Christ's Blood - the price of our redemption, the pledge of salvation and life eternal - make Christians meditate on it more fervently, may they savor its fruits more frequently in sacramental communion." So wrote St. John XXIII in his apostolic letter *Inde A Primus*, encouraging this devotion.

The first reading on this Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time is from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. This wonderful passage about the power of God's Word is also heard at the Easter Vigil. When the rain and snow fall on the earth, they make something happen: plants and trees and all creatures live and grow. That is what God's Word is like: it is effective, making things grow and change in us, achieving what God wills.

As we hear from the Letter to the Romans once again, Paul tells us that God does not care only for human beings, but for all creation, and all of creation has a share in the redemption of the world through Christ. Through our Baptism, we are already God's children, set free from our slavery to sin, but we have received only "the firstfruits," not the fulfillment of all God's promises. All creation is in this waiting mode, and we look to a time when not only ourselves, but the whole world, will be redeemed.

Today's gospel gives us the familiar parable of the sower followed by Jesus' explanation of the parable to the disciples. When the disciples asked Jesus why he speaks in parables, he responds in words that are like another parable: "To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away." The imagery and language of the parable is like a veil, which both conceals and reveals the shape beneath. It is not enough to hear the Word, the seed. We must also be receptive to it, welcoming God's Word and seeking the Word, the seed. We must also be receptive to it, welcoming God's Word and seeking understanding: when we do this, God opens our minds and grants us wisdom - makes us rich.

The reflection for this week is from Rachelle Linner, who is a freelance writer and reviewer, and who has a master of theological studies from Weston Jesuit School of Theology.

I have wasted inordinate amounts of time trying to determine the state of the ground in which I receive God's words. As if it mattered! Because it doesn't. Of course I wanted to believe that my life was rich soil. Was I glorifying God in that? Of course not. I was feeding my need to praise while squandering trust in God. Which is probably a good definition of idolatry.

Ironically, I had been thinking about the parable of the sower and seed - and my incessant need to gauge the state of my soul - when I heard Pope Francis famously ask, "Who am I to judge?" And I decided it was good to apply that advice to the question of the soil God has to work with. Because we never know. We don't know about ourselves, and we certainly don't know about another.

Maybe that plot of land that looks so lush is the fruit of a life that is blessed by abundant natural gifts, not interested in or open to God's word. And that seemingly arid plot over

there? The one that leads us to ask a contemporary version of Nathaniel's question, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). Maybe that plot of barren, sacred soil is not a desert but the soul of a just person whose acts of charity we cannot imagine.

Instead of judging the potential fruitfulness of our souls it is better to have confidence in God's promise that "my word shall not return to me void, /but shall do my will, /achieving the end for which I sent it." Instead of wondering how we are doing, we should let God go about his business of shaping our soul. God is, after all, a magnificently wasteful sower.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Is. 1:10-17/Mt. 10:34; 11:1

Tuesday: Is. 7:1-9/Mt. 11:20-24

Wednesday: Is. 10:5-7, 13b-16/Mt. 11:25-27

Thursday: Is. 26:7-9, 12, 16-19/Mt. 11:28-30

Friday: Is. 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8/Mt. 12:1-8

Saturday: Mi. 2:1-5/Mt. 12:14-21

Sunday: Wis. 12:13, 16-19/Rom. 8:26-27/Mt. 13:24-43 or 13:24-30

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

The stress and anxieties of family life are like "thorns which choke off" any opportunity to reflect on God's presence in our lives. Notice in today's gospel Jesus "went out of the house" so He could connect with the people he loved. Grasp five minutes each day to appreciate the people you love.

Hermitage House Youth Services is holding a Yard Sale the weekend of July 31 & August 1, from 8am - 2pm at Draketown Christian Church, 12460 Draketown Rd, Edinboro. Donation drop off times are July 11 & July 18 from 10am - 2pm. If you are unable to bring items during drop off times or need a donation picked up please call 184 397-3782—Phil
 Proceeds will go directly to supporting HHYS and their commitment to see youth have a successful future. Thank you for your support

ROOF PROJECT

Work has begun on the roof project. Thanks to all who gave so generously to help pay for the project. As happens often, more damage was discovered and so the project will cost more than originally projected. If you can help financially, we would be most grateful.

WORSHIP

Monday, July 13
 8:00 am + John Auer
 Tuesday, July 14
 8:00 am + Angela Osiecki (Josie Osiecki)
 Novena to St. Anthony of Padua after Mass
 Wednesday, July 15
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Living & Deceased Parishioners
 Thursday, July 16
 8:00 am + Kiffer Koogle (M/M Nelson Allen)
 Friday, July 17
 8:00 am + For the Repose of the Soul of
 Rev. Michael Allison
 Saturday, July 18
 4:30 pm + Peg Styborski (Kathleen Likovich)
 Sunday, July 19
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Chester Woika (John & Kay Weagraff)
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Living & Deceased Parishioners

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

**PARISH
 EVENTS
 HAVE BEEN
 SUSPENDED
 UNTIL
 FURTHER NOTICE**

MARRIAGE MOMENTS
 "All Creation is groaning in labor pains...we also groan within ourselves as we wait for...the redemption of our bodies." (Romans 8:22-23) As we humans continue to groan about Covid-19, we wait. We wait for a vaccine, for return to normal, or even an improvement on the normalcy of the past. We groan, and we pray that our labor pains may bring to birth a better world.

*Unless your faith is firm
 you shall not be firm!
 (Isaiah 7:9)*

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
(CONFESSION)

Every Friday 3 PM - 4 PM

Please go up the ramp to the right
 and into the Daily Mass Chapel

YOU MUST WEAR A FACE MASK

If there are several people waiting,
 please observe healthy social distancing.

REMINDER:

Parishioners are

REQUIRED

to wear a face mask in church

*"Jesus,
 make my faith firm
 so that I can become
 a peacemaker like you."*

STEWARDSHIP - ST. BERNADETTE MISSION

Offertory	\$955.00
Candles	12.00
Monthly	50.00
National Needs	30.00
Ascension	5.00
TOTAL	\$1,052.00

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$5,565 Paid: \$4,965

STEWARDSHIP - ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Offertory	\$2,919.00
Maintenance	171.00
Easter	60.00
Candles	19.00
Donation	25.00
CSA	2,700.00
Peter's Pence	36.00
International Needs	10.00
Ascension	50.00
TOTAL	\$5,990.00

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$25,450.00 Paid: \$21,757.50

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
