

"The seed is the Word of God" Luke 8:4-15 Sexagesima 2023

Grace and peace in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The seed is the Word of God. This is the theme of our Scripture lesson for today, above all in our gospel. The Word has the power to vivify in our hearts the recognition of our need for a Savior and the motivation to hear more of the message of salvation. In our text for today, the Lord makes the comparison between the Word and the seed sown in the field. In the book of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 55: 10-11), the Lord says thus: For as the rain descends from the heavens and snow, and does not return there, but fills the earth, and causes it to germinate and produce, and gives seed to him that sows, and bread to him that eats; So shall my word be that cometh out of my mouth". That is to say, the Word is like the rain that enables the harvest. In both cases, the Word has the power to give life.

St. Paul tells the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 3: 6), I planted, Apollos watered: but God has given growth. We believe that the Holy Spirit is active in the preaching of the Word. However, although the preacher must be prepared for his office, power is not in the preacher, but in the Word of God.

Our Prophecy for today continues: "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;

It shall not return to Me void,

But it shall accomplish what I please,

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And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out with joy,

And be led out with peace;

The mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you,

And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree,

And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;

And it shall be to the Lord for a name,

For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Among the trials and difficulties of this life, we need comfort only the Word of God has. If there is no preaching of the Word, there is no consolation. But the Word of God brings joy and peace.

The first point of the parable of the sower is that preachers must preach the Word throughout the world, which is the field of harvest for the church. No matter the variation in the fruits, they must preach the Word.

One who sowed, went out to sow his seed; And sowing, some fell by the way, and was trodden down; And the birds of the air ate it. And another fell on the stone; And born, dried up, because it had no moisture. And another part fell among the thorns; And when the thorns

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were born together, they drowned it. And another part fell into good soil, and when it was born, it brought forth fruit a hundredfold.

That means, in this world will always be distractions and challenges to the growth of faith. Temptations can divert us from the right path. But the Word always has the power to revive faith.

I've had the privilege of preaching to people who have spent much of their lives on the wrong side of the law. When you belittle God's commandments, then the authorities have the God-given right to take away your freedom and to try and rehabilitate you. As you probably know, most people who go to prison end up reoffending. I've met some repeat offenders who are unashamed of their actions and feel no remorse whatsoever.

However, for those who repent of their sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. God is with us, even in prison. St. Paul was imprisoned, not for his own fault, but for the injustice of the authorities. But, whether the authorities are just or unjust, we must respect them and suffer all because of Christ.

I've had conversations with people who have done considerable time in prison, and something that was always of help to them was the words of Christ from St. Luke 23: 39-43. And one of the evildoers that were hanged reviled him, saying, "If you are the Christ, save yourself

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and us". And the other answered and rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, being in the same condemnation? And we, indeed, justly suffer; Because we received what our deeds deserved; but this one did no wrong." And he said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come to your kingdom". And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, Today you will be with me in paradise."

With the help of God, we can surpass all the trials of this life. Let's pray for our brethren, for their restoration to their families and the church. Because we are all sinners, but we all have the promise of eternal life in baptism. Amen.