

15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:10-11

Thus says the Lord:

‘For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.’

PSALM

Ps 65(64):10a-d. 10e-11. 12-13. 14. R Luke 8:8

R Some seed fell into good soil and yielded its fruit.

You visit the earth, give it water; you fill it with riches. God’s ever-flowing river brims over to prepare the grain. R

And thus you prepare it: you drench its furrows; you level it, soften it with showers; you bless its growth. R

You crown the year with your bounty. Abundance flows in your pathways; in pastures of the desert it flows. The hills are girded with joy. R

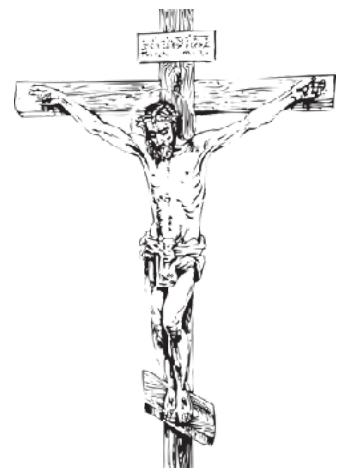
The meadows clothed with flocks. The valleys are decked with wheat. They shout for joy; yes, they sing! R

R Some seed fell into good soil and yielded its fruit.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:18-23

Brothers and Sisters: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption, and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia...

The seed is the word of God, Christ the sower; all who find him will live for ever. **Alleluia...**

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:1-23

At that time: Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear.'

Then the disciples came and said to him, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' And he answered them, 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the

kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

'Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately

receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

REFLECTION

"The outcome of all learning is that we should know God, and because we know him, we should love him; and because we love him, we should become like him."

— *St Bonaventure*

"The seed is the word of God, and the field is the world. Let your heart become good soil."

— *St Augustine (paraphrased from his sermons on the Gospels)*

"The Lord never ceases to sow the seed of his word; it is we who must prepare the field of our hearts."

— *Venerable Bede (paraphrased)*