



July 16, 2023

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 55:10-11 | Rom 8:18-23 | Mt 13:1-23

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

At Mass with my family recently, my five-year-old daughter caught the last four words of the mystery of faith as if she was hearing them for the first time. She was bursting with excitement as we finished saying, “We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection, until you come again.” She turned to me and said, “Mom! We said, ‘until you come again.’ Does that mean Jesus is coming back? He’s coming HERE?” What a lovely, emotion-filled response to learning that truth. She has heard those words countless times, but this time she heard the truth behind them. Her soul has been made for relationship with God from her time in the womb. The Holy Spirit has been preparing her to receive those words when she was ready to hear them in their fullness, and as the responsorial psalm proclaimed: “The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.” For those in the young, challenging years when it may seem easier to leave the little ones at home rather than take them to Mass, let’s remember what we are told in the first reading from Isaiah. “Thus says the Lord: ... my word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.”

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

How often do you find yourself listening to a friend or family member not to really hear what they are saying, but to plan your response? Do we do that while we pray as well? Sometimes I catch myself praying with an inner monologue behind it, deciding how I want that prayer to be answered. Now all of this may not be exactly what Jesus meant when he said, “This is why I speak to them in parables, because *they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand,*” but it is worth exploring. When we are so anxious to get our words in – either to another person, or to God, we’re not really being the rich soil that the other’s words deserve. We’re not even the rocky ground or the thorny path of which the Lord speaks; we’re more like a giant rubber wall off of which the words bounce! Let’s take some time to consider how our practice of listening and receiving others, including the Lord, is preparing us (or not) for the return of Jesus. And if there is room to improve, now is a good time to do it.

PRAY *Lord, Jesus Christ, prepare my heart and my soul so that your words and your desires for my life will not fall on rocky soil. Give me the strength to be a Godly sower to all I encounter, especially my family, so your glory will be revealed. Amen.*