

12 JULY 2020

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OPENING HYMN

A lamp for our steps has been given,
A light has been set on a hill;
God's Word in its truth may be trusted,
By all who surrender their will.

To order the chaos of darkness,
Give hope in the midst of despair,
To make of our lives new creations
And lighten the burdens we bear.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

O God, You who show the light of Your truth to those who go astray, so that they may return to the right path, give all who for the faith they profess are accounted Christians, the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ and to strive after all that does it honor. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

FIRST READING: Is 55:10-11

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 64:10-14

Our Response is: Some seed fell into rich soil and produced its crop.

You care for the earth, give it water,
you fill it with riches.
Your river in heaven brims over
to provide its grain. **R/**

And thus you provide for the earth;
you drench its furrows,
you level it, soften it with showers,
you bless its growth. **R/**

You crown the year with your goodness.
Abundance flows in your steps,
in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. **R/**

The hills are girded with joy,
the meadows covered with flocks,
the valleys are decked with wheat.
They shout for joy, yes, they sing. **R/**

SECOND READING: Rom 8:18-23

GOSPEL: Mt 13:1-23

REFLECTION:

Every year, farmers plough their fields and sow seeds with the hope that they will receive a good harvest. They will be well aware of the dangers that accompany farming like famine, drought, excessive flooding, locust attacks etc... These dangers may cause damage and a huge loss to the farmers, and yet, they strive against all odds with the hope of a bumper harvest.

The first reading of today gives us confidence and courage that God's "*Word shall ... achieve the end for which God sent it.*" It shows us the effectiveness of God's Word to produce fruit in our lives. How has the Word of God nurtured my life till today? **Pause** The responsorial psalm tells us that there is no ground left untilled by God. He will attend to all the dryness that comes in the way of receiving God's Word. He will soften it, water or nurture it and will let it grow. Let us **pause and reflect** with hope and thanksgiving in our hearts for what God is doing for us.

In the gospel text, Jesus explains that the seeds falling on rich soil did not all produce the same abundance of fruit. Some gave thirty, some sixty, and some a hundredfold of fruit. Matthew is trying to highlight the fact that God cares more about the quality of fruit we bear as we grow in our Christian Life. The Word sown is 'Christ', which needs to take root in our hearts and lead us to conversion. God actually offers us more than a hundredfold. He offers us fullness of life forever. Are we willing to allow God's Word to help us go beyond our indifference, fears and limited expectations and visions? **Pause.**

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader: Let us pray that God's Word takes root in our hearts and bears fruit in our lives. Let us confidently bring our prayers before the Lord.

Our response is: Gracious Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all the members of the Church, that we may hear God's Word with open hearts and allow it to bear abundant fruit in our lives; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all the people in the world, that they may be open to God's Word. May they be strengthened to live it in their lives; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all those who are suffering from hunger and poverty. May those who have in abundance be willing to share their wealth with those in need; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

We pray for all baptised Christians that we may be faithful to God's will and bear fruit in our lives; **(pause)**; let us pray to the Lord...

Leader: Gracious God, you strengthen us with all we need to live a fruitful life of discipleship. Hear our prayers that in studying your Word and living lives of love and service to all humanity we might live with you and the eternal Word. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us together at the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:
(All say the Lord's Prayer together) Our Father, ...

CLOSING PRAYER

O Lord we pray that by our participation in Your Word, its saving effects may grow in our lives. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

**Go, go into the World, tell them I'm alive
Go into the streets, tell them that I live,
Oh! Oh! Oh! That I live in you.
Go, go into the World, claim it for your King,
Go into the streets, dry your people's tears,
Oh! Oh! Oh! Making all things new.**

I tell you now, "Go proclaim"
I give to you, my Spirit's flame.
He is at work, inside of You,
To overcome, all the powers of darkness.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)