

[98] FIFTEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME A

FIRST READING

The rain makes the earth fruitful.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 55:10-11

The rain and the snow fall from the sky.
But they don't return without watering the earth
that produces seeds to plant and grain to eat.
And that's how it is with my words.
They don't return to me without doing everything I sent them to do.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

65:9, 11-12, 13

*R. (Luke 8:8) The seed that falls on good ground
will yield a fruitful harvest.*

Our God, you take care of the earth
and send rain to help the soil
grow all kinds of crops.
Your rivers never run dry,
and you prepare the earth
to produce much grain.

*R. The seed that falls on good ground
will yield a fruitful harvest.*

Wherever your footsteps
touch the earth,
a rich harvest is gathered.
Desert pastures blossom,
and mountains celebrate.

*R. The seed that falls on good ground
will yield a fruitful harvest.*

Meadows are filled
with sheep and goats;

valleys overflow with grain
and echo with joyful songs.

*R. The seed that falls on good ground
will yield a fruitful harvest.*

SECOND READING

God's Spirit leads us to share in the glory of Christ

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans

8:14-18

Brothers and sisters:

Only those people who are led by God's Spirit are his children.
God's Spirit doesn't make us slaves who are afraid of him.
Instead, we become his children and call him our Father.
God's Spirit makes us sure that we are his children.

His Spirit lets us know that together with Christ
we will be given what God has promised.
We will also share in the glory of Christ,
because we have suffered with him.

I am sure that what we are suffering now
cannot compare with the glory that will be shown to us.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;
all who come to him will live forever.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

A sower went out to sow.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 13:1-9

Jesus went out beside Lake Galilee,
where he sat down to teach.
Such large crowds gathered around him that he had to sit in a boat,
while the people stood on the shore.
Then he taught them many things by using stories.

He said: "A farmer went out to scatter seed in a field.
While the farmer was scattering the seed,
some of it fell along the road and was eaten by birds.
Other seeds fell on thin, rocky ground and quickly started growing
because the soil was not very deep.
But when the sun came up,
the plants were scorched and dried up,
because they did not have enough roots.

"Some other seeds fell where thorn bushes grew up and choked the plants.
But a few seeds did fall on good ground
where the plants produced a hundred or sixty
or thirty times as much as was scattered.

"If you have ears, pay attention!"

The gospel of the Lord.

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for being our Sower. Help us to listen to God's Word which was planted in our hearts at Baptism. Help us to gather around you to pay attention to your message today. Help us to grow in love where we are planted — with our families, with our dear neighbors, with our friends, or wherever our summer plans take us. In your name we pray.

Amen.

Readings

Isaiah 55:10-11

Psalms 65:9,11-12,13

Romans 8:14-18

Matthew 13:1-9

Reflection

Did you ever notice how sunflowers naturally follow the sun? Once the plant grows up and the flower blooms, the flower always faces the sun. So when the sun rises in the East in the morning — the sunflower faces that direction. As the sun travels across the sky during the day the sunflower will turn its face and follow the sun to the west where it sets each evening.

We, too, can follow Jesus, the Son. He encourages, guides, and helps us to grow in becoming more loving with our family members in our home, and with our friends in the neighborhood. We have many opportunities this summer to be kind toward our brothers and sisters. We can share our games, take turns, help around the house — without even being asked or reminded.

We can follow Jesus the Son, by remembering our prayers in the morning, at meals, and night before we go to sleep at night. We can pay attention to people who may be lonely or sad. We can help a neighbor with yard work. We can share a smile or a hug with others.

Our love for Jesus is so wonderful that we can't keep it inside of us. We must share the Good News with others.

Discussion Questions

1. How can we live the message in today's Gospel message this week?
2. Do we listen to others who spread the message?
3. Who are the people in our lives who spread the message of God to us each day?
4. What can we do in our home or neighborhood to spread the Good News this week?
5. How can we pay more attention to our Parent(s) when they ask us to do something?

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Activity

1. Sing "Like a Sunflower" from Carey Landy's Bloom Where You're Planted.
2. Read The Sunflower Parable by Liz Curtis Higgs, Thomas Nelson publisher, 1997.
3. Act out the Parable.
4. Hand out packages of sunflower seeds for the children to plant.
5. Hand out roasted sunflower seeds to enjoy as a snack --- after Mass.
6. Sing "Take the Word of God with You" by Christopher Walker.