

Homilies from last Sunday

Homily for Fifteenth Sunday of the Year – A

Readings; Isaiah 55: 10-11; Romans 8: 9, 11-13; Matthew 11: 25-30



Fr Michael says:

The Sower

People were drawn to listen to Jesus, because he told stories, which made His message clearer and more meaningful to His listeners. Despite the rather strange words that Jesus says about Parables, they provide Him with an excellent way of communicating with people, if they are open to Him. Today's parable reflects probably the words of Jesus, the interpretation given to them comes from the early Church, which was seeking to look at the needs and situation of the fledgling Church. The Word is like rain, it will encourage growth as the earth softens and opens up.

Story telling is part of the rabbinical way of teaching; they became important, as explained by a learned Rabbi. There was a time when Truth went about naked and unadorned, but people shied away from it. One day he met Story, happily dressed in a multi-coloured robe, who asked him why he was so sad. He replied that he felt old and ugly and that was why he was avoided. "No" said Story, here, put on my robe and see what happens." So he did so and was welcomed everywhere. The Rabbi concluded: "The fact is, people are unable to face the naked Truth; they much prefer the Truth disguised!" Truth is more palatable when it is dressed up!

A short parable can contain a great truth and it can allow us to penetrate to the heart of that truth. So what is Jesus saying to us today? The word of God is to the human heart, what a seed is to the earth: it is barren until it is planted! So too is our heart!

As the Second Vatican Council has put it, each time we come to Mass we celebrate and dine at two Tables: that of the Word and that of the Eucharist. Through both these means we are all called to a better and more fruitful life. His word comes to us like the rain, gently and as defenceless as a seed falling on the ground and then it gains its greatest strength because it moves our hearts to action! God also speaks to us through the words of our daily lives and His Word helps understand and relate to what is happening – it is how we try to respond that He looks for, discerning how well we have listened! Vincent Van Gogh has put it like this: "Life is only a kind of sowing time, the harvest is not here."

As a seed needs soil, so the word needs a receptive heart. The earth responds to the rain and sun, so that even the desert blooms – but the arid human heart has the power to resist it! So, Lord, soften our hearts with your grace, open them with your gentle love, so that the precious seed of your Word may take root in our hearts and bear fruit in our lives!"