

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR A

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God of all that exists,
plant your Word
in our hearts,
and may it take root
and grow there.
We want to be
your good soil,
producing a harvest
of kindness and love,
so leading others
to find you
and give themselves to you.
We make this prayer to you
through Christ, our Lord.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The focus of the readings is the eventual success of God's will. The first reading tells us that God's Word will succeed just as surely as rain waters the earth. The Gospel says that even though many seeds seem to be lost, the harvest, in the end, is great. God's Word will triumph. The eventual success of God's Word is not dependent on us, but each of us can personally provide the "soil" for its growth in us.

FIRST READING: *Isaiah 55:10-11*

This is a reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Our God says,

"When the rain and snow
come down from heaven,
they water the earth
so that things will grow
and people will have bread.
My word is like that.
When I speak,
my word goes out from me,
and it does what I send it to do."

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: *Psalm 119*

RESPONSE:

Leader:

All:



1. God, your Word is sent by you:
2. God, your Word is al - ways true:
3. God, your Word will bring us joy:
4. God, your Word shows us the way:

O - pen our hearts... to



lis - ten to you... O - pen our hearts... to lis - ten to you...

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Lis - ten with your heart. Lis - ten to the Good News...
Hear what God is say - ing — to you and me. So ...

GOSPEL: *Matthew 13:1-9*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

One day Jesus was sitting by the sea,
and a large crowd of people
gathered around him.
He used parables to teach them many things.
This is one of the parables he told them:

“There once was a person
who went out to plant some seeds.
Some of the seeds fell beside the path,
and the birds came and ate them.
Some seeds fell on ground
where there were lots of rocks.
The seeds grew up fast,
but since there wasn’t
much dirt around them,
the roots didn’t grow very deep.
And when the sun got too hot,
the seeds dried up and died.
And some seeds fell into a patch of thorns.
The thorns grew around them,
and the seeds didn’t have
enough room to grow so they also died.
But some of the seeds fell on good soil.
And when the grain grew up,
it was 30 or 60 or 100 times
as much as the farmer had planted.
Anyone who has ears,
listen to what I am really saying!”

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

After the Gospel, give the children
an opportunity to share what they
heard in the story.

What happened to some of the
seeds?

Explore those images with the
children.

You will notice that we have
chosen the short form of the reading.
The long form includes an allegorical
interpretation (verses 18-23). Since
these verses are not included, allow
the children to suggest their own
allegories. Ask them what *they* think
Jesus meant by “beside the path,”
“lots of rocks,” “patch of thorns.”

Some of the seed fell on good soil
and when the grain grew up there
was 30 or 60 or 100 times as much as
the farmer planted. How can we be
sure we are that “good soil” where
the Word of God can grow?

Take time with this. We cannot
always assume the children
understand this kind of imagery.
What is important is that they realize
they can be open to God’s Word, they
can help themselves be ready to hear
it and think about it.