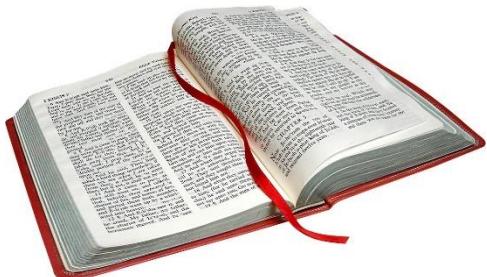




Dear Friends,

When we read the first Reading from the prophet Isaiah 55: 10 - 11, and its response, Psalm 64, we begin to sense what the Gospel is going to be ... yes, Luke 13: 1 - 23.



[Readings for the Fifteenth Sunday of the year 2020](#)

Each of these is about creation. More importantly about God's hand in creation. He it was who bought our land, our world into being. We know that the Word of God is Jesus.

Jesus as the Word of God did so much with his life bring about what Isaiah speaks: "as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the Earth making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower, and bread for the eating, so the word that goes forth from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do".



When you apply something of these words to Jesus, you can see something of his mission ...

Sent by the Father to sow seed which, at the end of life, could be harvested, and go still further to provide for the needs of others.

In the same way, we say that we agree with all Isaiah said. We attribute to God the creation of the world. Our world is created anew each day and so we can say: you care for the Earth, give it water, you fill it with riches. You provide for the Earth; you drench its furrows; you level it, soften it with showers, you bless its growth.

What God does for the Earth he also does for each one of us.

He creates us,
He brings us into a new day,
He cares for us
He gives us the water of life,
bread for the eating,
gentle showers soften us
new growth so that His Word can be achieved
in and through us.



The gospel needs to be imagined...

A popular man, an intriguing man,
a man with a message,
is surrounded by crowds all of whom
want to hear him.
If they can, they want to see him even
more, if they can, they want to be close

enough to touch him.

The man is standing on the seashore... as he speaks, more and more people gather, he wants to speak to everyone who is there, not just those who are close around him.

How can He achieve this? An idea dawns...

There is a fishing boat close by he asked his disciples to bring the fishing boat and he climbs in... They pushed the boat a little way out and he stands there... Now more people can see him and more people can hear him and he begins to speak. What can he say to them that they will understand?

He always used every day circumstances in which to speak the Word of God...
He raises his eyes and can see a farmer walking along through one of his fields
... he is sowing seed.

His hand reaches into the sack at his side, and he spreads the seed, handful by handful ... it's not very orderly some seed falls on hard ground, some on the path, some falls just where it was supposed to be - in the prepared ground.

This is what Jesus will speak to the people about. He will tell them that just like the sower, people will speak the word of God to them, will their hearts be open enough? Will they be tuned to the word of God? Will their lives be an image of a Christian life?

What do you think was happening in the minds and hearts of those who heard this parable? Would they have heard it just as a story? Maybe a story with some meaning? Or would it be that there were some people who heard it and received it as the Word of God?

We are just the same, we hear the Word of God just as a story because it's a hot day and I just want to get out... Because I'm going through a tough time and can't take any more... Whatever the reason the story is wasted really. It will all too soon be forgotten, disregarded.

Others listened to the story and found some meaning in it, maybe they took it as a moral message on how to behave throughout their lives. But when they got home they forgot about the story and left it with the man who was standing in the boat. They had had the best of intentions but because they weren't rooted in prayer the Word of God quickly fell away from them.



Then there were those who had worked with God, and on whom God had worked. God had tilled the soil of the land, he fed it, He dug it to remove the weeds from it, there were no thorns on which they could catch themselves. They would understand the full meaning of the story and take it to their hearts.

This story became a lot more than about a farmer sowing his seed. The seed fell into their lives of prayer and found a home. The seed grew with every thought. The story of the Farmer was retold to all who would listen. Their lives have been enriched by an encounter with a man called Jesus.

We need to ask ourselves: how is my prayer life? Do I value the fact that I can pray to God and he does listen? Do I in anyway act as Jesus did? He must have felt compassionate for each and every person who had gathered around him, waiting and wanting to hear the Word of God.

He wanted to give them his best and nothing else would do. What a powerful story the crowd heard on that day. Today it is our privilege to hear the same story, and to work out, in which soil the seed of God falls in our lives. Some of us might settle for having the seed fall on the side of the path. Possibly we underestimate ourselves. God alone knows.

Being humble we may say that the seed fell into our lives but never took root and quickly disappeared. Or, being vain, did the seed fall into the rich soil that had been prepared by God for us?

The work does not all belong to God; we share in this word by taking it to heart and thinking about its meaning and how we might find a new life through it. New life, new ideas, new hopes, new dreams, do not belong to us alone, they are given to us for others. God sows the seed of his word that through us, others might hear it. We are each God's Word to those whose lives we touch. What a responsibility!

If you are going on holiday and happen to see a farmer looking after his fields remember the story that Jesus told... Wonder about its meaning all over again... Enjoy God's word.

How many times have we said to you during our 14 years among you that St Ignatius of Loyola, our Patron Saint taught his disciples to first read and imagine the story and only then try to work out its deepest meaning.

Read ... Imagine ... Read again, let God speak and then, having listened speak again to God. He loves to hear His children's' voices as they work things out.



Enjoy this day and the week ahead. May the Blessing of God's Word be with you.

Fr. Michael

Sr. Liza