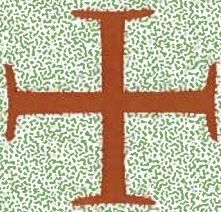


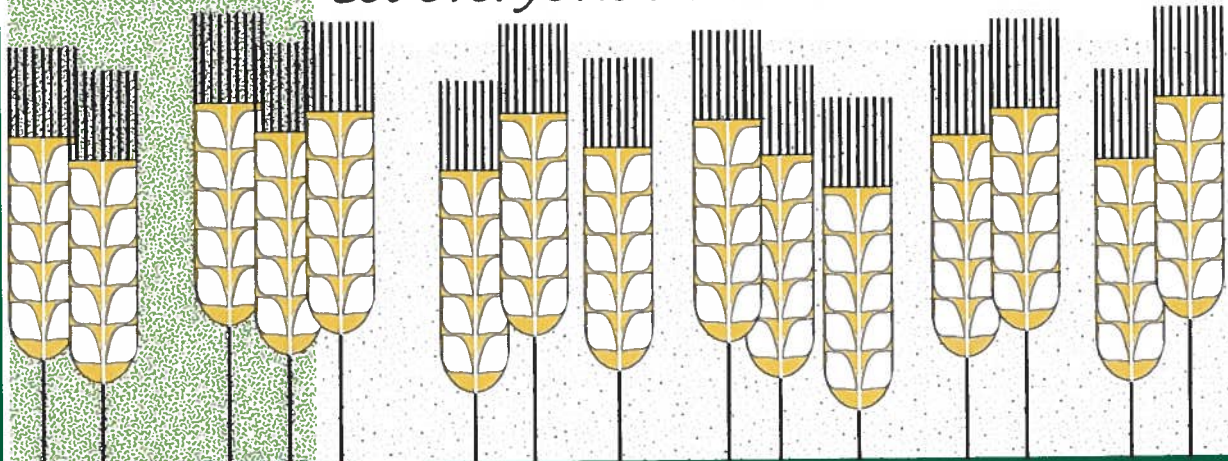
The Roman Catholic Parishes of
Sacred Heart, Goodrich
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin

15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 12-13, 2026



One day a farmer went out sowing. Part of the seed fell on a footpath where birds picked it up. Part of the seed fell on rocky ground. Again, part of it fell among thorns which grew up and choked it. Part of it, finally, landed on good soil and yielded grain at a hundred fold. Let everyone heed what he hears!



*The seed is the Word of God
and Christ is the sower.*

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Weekend Masses:

St. Margaret Mary	Sat. 5:00 pm	Sun. 10:30 am
Sacred Heart	Sun. 7:30 am	
St. James	Sun 9:00 am	

Confessions:

St. Margaret Mary	Sat. 4:15 pm—4:45pm
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Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotable - "God is seen by those who have the capacity to see him, provided they keep the eyes of their mind open."

—Saint Theophilus of Antioch

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time				July 18-19, 2026
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, July 18 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, July 19 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, July 19 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, July 19 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron	Fr. Ron
Ushers	Dave Emling Bob Schultz Brent Fulton Todd Datweiler	Dennis Pankey James Mallaney	Dallas Ferris Dave Ladehoff Dan Forsythe Jerry Ogrentz	Erik Wheeler Corinn Wheeler Dustin Truetner Sean Riordan
Lector	Bobbi Buza	Mike Hertz	Kelly Buente	Mary Hope Pleckham
Eucharistic Minister			Todd Mesewicz	Karen Rushman
Servers				Gavin Downs
Greeters			Greeter—Dallas Ferris R. Leader—Rita Thiesen	Kim Smicker

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, July 13 (SMM)

8:00 am +JR Matern (Greg & Kay)

Tuesday, July 14 (SH)

8:00 am +Tom Buckley (Peaches Turner)

Wednesday, July 15 (SJ)

8:00 am +Harold Fournier (Gene/Kathy O'Connor)

Friday, July 17 (SMM)

8:00am +Mark Gray (Pat Gray)

Saturday, July 18 (SMM)

5:00 pm +Donna Regnier (Pat Gray)

+John Andrezewski (Pat Gray)

Sunday, July 19

7:30 am (SH) +Jeff Cooley (MaryAnne Cooley)

+Gerald Bernicky (Jerry/JoLynn Ogrentz)

9:00 am (SJ) +Dorine Schafer (Scanlon Collision)

+Carson Cross (Jackie and Family)

10:30 am (SMM) For All the Parish Family

Looking Ahead

Monday, July 13—SH Parish Council 7 pm

Tuesday, July 14—SH CCW meeting at 6:30

Sunday, August 2—K of C Ladies Aux. Ice Cream Social 2-4pm at St. James



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Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550

Deacon – Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com

Home—815-933-4077

Parish Email – smm_sja_sh@yahoo.com

TriParish web page – www.triparishcatholics.org

Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities

Tri Parish Church office—Tanhya Osenga 426-2550

Julie Bisailon 426-2550

Bulletin – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550 debjen04@gmail.com

Religious Education –

St. MM – Jill Fulton jfulton.stmm@gmail.com

Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015

St. James—Tanhya Osenga tosenga81@gmail.com

Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048

Prayer Line—

SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 jdstreefarms1@gmail.com

Question of the week— What will I do this week to cultivate God's word? Which passages from scripture have I applied to my life recently or regularly?

Collections Weekend of July 4-5, 2026

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,998

St. James—\$1,901

Sacred Heart— \$997

Thank you for your generosity!

Parish News:

All Parishes—

- ⇒ TriParish Prayer Group will meet each Monday at 7 pm at St James church
- ⇒ Tri-Parish Office Hours— Our office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am—12 pm.
- ⇒ K of C Ladies Auxiliary will be selling 50/50 raffle tickets after all masses the July 25-26 weekend

St. Margaret Mary-

St. James-

- ⇒ Beth Brosseau has volunteered to chair the rosary committee, if you are interested in helping please call 815-671-2286 .

Sacred Heart—

- ⇒ Sacred Heart CCW will be having the following Summer meeting: Tues. July 14th, 6:30pm & Tues. Aug.11th at 6:30pm. Hostesses for the July meeting will be Laurie, Marie, Denise, and Rosie. The August meeting's hostesses will be Terri, Tina, Brenda, and Shirley Ferris. All women in the parish over 18 are considered members and are welcome! Come join the fun!

Gospel Shorts Spiritual Agriculture

Think back to a time you were crawling through a spiritual valley. God seemed far away. Your prayers seemed to bounce off the ceiling. And then you received an encouragement card from someone. On the front were the words to Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding." The Word went straight to your heart and took root. As you pondered on those words, you noticed the seed of hope beginning to grow.

Reflection— How to Find Meaning in Suffering

No one has ever fully understood why so many good people are forced to endure a great deal of emotional, physical, and/or spiritual pain.

Simply realizing that suffering is a normal part of life can be the first step toward finding good in suffering. Suffering will always be a mystery.

The Lord never said the Christian life would be easy. But he did promise that you will never be alone in the painful times of your life.

Changes Coming to the Parish Office

Barb Riker has decided to retire from her job at the parish office effectively at the end of June. Barb has worked for the parish for 38 years and has decided to spend more time with her family. She began working here when Fr. Driscoll was pastor and has served under six pastors overall. I am grateful for all she has done for the parish and parishioners over all those years.

During the months of July and August Tanhya, the director of religious education at St. James, will shadow Julie and learn all aspects of the parish office. This will include scheduling events, running payroll, and paying the bills. She will staff the office four days a week on average.

After Labor Day Julie will only be coming in two days a week as Tanhya assumes most of the office duties. Debbie will continue as the bulletin editor, all items for the bulletin should be sent to her.

There are a lot of things that happen behind the scenes of a parish, and the office is at the heart of it all. I am thankful for what Barb has contributed over the years and for what Julie, Debbie, and Tanhya continue to do for our parish community.



Current Status for 2026 CMAA

Parish	Goal	Pledged	Paid
Sacred Heart	\$7,200	\$8,875	\$6,975
St. James	\$9,800	\$7,205	\$7,205
St. MM	\$10,200	\$7,725	\$7,335

If you were unable to donate to Fr. Allam's ministry this past weekend, we will be taking donations for the next two weekends. Please make checks payable to "Allam Charitable Team". If giving cash, just put it in an envelope marked "For Fr. Allam" and we will send it to him. Thank you for supporting Fr. Allam and the poor he serves in India.

Adult Ed Classes

Our adult ed classes will resume in September, the topic will be The Gospel of St. Mark. If you would like to attend these classes, please call the office (815-426-2550) and register so we can order the books. The start date will be Wednesday September 9th.

Obscure saint of the week: St. Jason of Tarsus (July 12) Acts 17:5-9 says that Saint Paul the Apostle stayed at Jason's home in Thessalonica, and he is mentioned in *Romans 16:21*. Legend says he was bishop of Tarsus in Cilicia and evangelized the Greek island of Corfu. While imprisoned for preaching the faith, he helped convert the *Martyrs of Corfu*. He was a martyr.



Other obscure saint of the week: St. John Jones (July 12) was born to a strong Catholic Welsh family. John joined the Franciscans in Greenwich, England. When his monastery was dissolved in 1559, he traveled to France to study. John was ordained at Rheims, France.

John returned to England to work with Catholic prisoners at Marshalsea Prison in London. He was arrested for being a priest and imprisoned at Wisbech Castle but escaped to the Continent. He lived for a while at Pontoise, France, and then the Ara Coeli Franciscan Observant house at Rome, Italy, finally returning to England as a missionary 1592. He worked in several places in the country and was elected Franciscan provincial of England.

He was arrested and tortured by the priest-catcher Topcliffe in 1596. Imprisoned for two years, he did time with Blessed John Rigby. He was convicted on July 3, 1598, for the treason of being a Catholic priest.

His execution took place early in the morning to reduce the chance of a mob; the executioner, roused out of bed for the job, forgot his ropes. During the delay while he went for them, John preached to the crowd that had gathered and explained he was being murdered for his faith, not any disloyalty to his country. He was one of the *Forty Martyrs of England and Wales*.

The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

At about that same time Jesus left the house and sat on the beach. In no time at all a crowd gathered along the shoreline, forcing him to get into a boat. Using the boat as a pulpit, he addressed his congregation, telling stories.

"What do you make of this? A farmer planted seed. As he scattered the seed, some of it fell on the road, and birds ate it. Some fell in the gravel; it sprouted quickly but didn't put down roots, so when the sun came up it withered just as quickly. Some fell in the weeds; as it came up, it was strangled by the weeds. Some fell on good earth and produced a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.

"Are you listening to this? Really listening?"

The disciples came up and asked, "Why do you tell stories?"

He replied, "You've been given insight into God's kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn't been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understandings flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears. That's why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight. In their present state they can stare till doomsday and not see it, listen till they're blue in the face and not get it. I don't want Isaiah's forecast repeated all over again:

Your ears are open but you don't hear a thing.
Your eyes are awake but you don't see a thing.
The people are blockheads!
They stick their fingers in their ears
so they won't have to listen;
They screw their eyes shut
so they won't have to look,
so they won't have to deal with me face-to-face
and let me heal them.

"But you have God-blessed eyes—eyes that see! And God-blessed ears—ears that hear! A lot of people, prophets and humble believers among them, would have given anything to see what you are seeing, to hear what you are hearing, but never had the chance.

"Study this story of the farmer planting seed. When anyone hears news of the Kingdom and doesn't take it in, it just remains on the surface, and so the Evil One comes along and plucks it right out of that person's heart. This is the seed the farmer scatters on the road.

"The seed cast in the gravel—this is the person who hears and instantly responds with enthusiasm. But there is no soil of character, and so when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it.

"The seed cast in the weeds is the person who hears the Kingdom news, but weeds of worry and illusions about getting more and wanting everything under the sun strangle what was heard, and nothing comes of it.

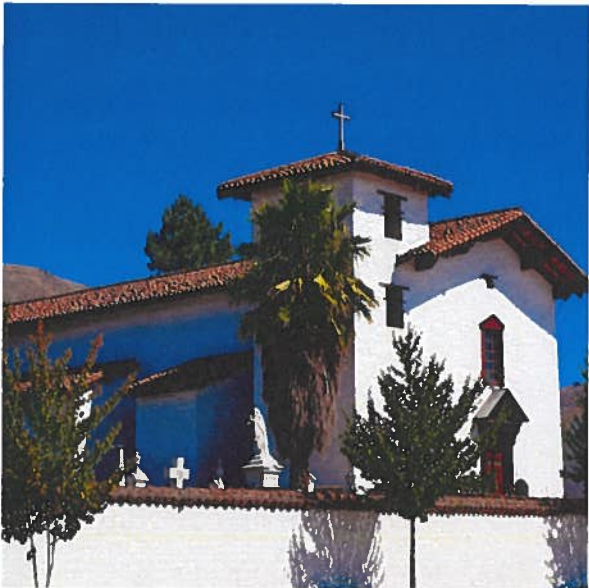
"The seed cast on good earth is the person who hears and takes in the News and then produces a harvest beyond his wildest dreams" (from *Matthew 13*).

Catholic Pilgrimage Destination: California.

Today, all twenty-one California missions still stand, making them one of the most remarkable pilgrimage routes in the United States.

Our Catholic American Pilgrimage continues this week with a journey to California where some of the state's most famous cities began not with gold rushes or railroads, but with Catholic missions.

Long before California became a state, Franciscan missionaries traveled north from Mexico to bring the Gospel to the native peoples of the region. Beginning in 1769, St. Junípero Serra established the first of what would eventually become twenty-one missions stretching along El Camino Real, the "Royal Road."



Far more than churches, these missions became centers of prayer, education, agriculture, craftsmanship, and community life. They introduced farming, irrigation, music, architecture, and new trades while serving as places where the sacraments were celebrated and the Catholic faith was taught.

As settlers gradually gathered around the missions, communities grew. Over time, many developed into the cities we know today.

San Diego grew around Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first mission founded by St. Junípero Serra.

San Francisco takes its name from Mission San Francisco de Asís, better known today as Mission Dolores.

Santa Barbara developed around Mission Santa Barbara, often called the "Queen of the Missions."

San Jose traces its Catholic roots to Mission Santa Clara de Asís, whose influence shaped the surrounding region.

Today, all twenty-one California missions still stand, making them one of the most remarkable pilgrimage routes in the United States. Some remain active parish churches. Others continue as shrines and historic sites where visitors can attend Mass, pray, and learn about the earliest days of Catholicism in the American West.

Like every pilgrimage, a visit to the California missions is about more than history. These missions remind us that the Church helped shape the cultural and spiritual landscape of our nation long before many of its cities existed.

If your travels take you to California, consider stepping off the highway for a while and onto El Camino Real. Behind the adobe walls of these centuries-old missions is a story that helped shape both the Church in America and the state of California itself.

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Join us for this one-day retreat:

Painting a Different Future

Living in unsettling and profoundly disturbing times marked by uncertainty, division, and rapid change can make it difficult to picture anything but darkness, destruction, loss, and despair. Yet as people of faith we yearn to see the colors of certainty, security, hope, comfort, joy, optimism, mission, and promise. Together we will explore ways to mentor and encourage one another, deepen our spiritual grounding, and create a vision for living in courage and peace that can guide our lives and communities forward.

Let's paint a new picture!

Leader:

Fr. Vern Arseneau
Diocese of Joliet, Retired

Sponsored by:
Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary

WHEN: Friday, August 14, 2026
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

One Heart, One Soul Spirituality Center
2041 W. State Route 113
Kankakee, IL 60901

For more information and to register,
please follow this link:

19th Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola

Spiritual Directors:

Susan Amann,
Sr. Linda Hatton, sscm,
& Sr. Myra Lambert, sscm

WHEN:

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday,
beginning September 15, 2026
through May, 2027
7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

WHERE:

Online via our ZOOM meeting platform
Sponsored by:

Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary

To register, please use this
QR code to visit our
website:



Questions? Contact Susan Amann:
samann@sscm-usa.org

Questions Catholics Ask

Were Catholic immigrants always welcome here?

Definitely not. The original American Dream didn't include "Romish" or "Popish" adherents. In pre-colonial times, of course, a strong Catholic presence seemed likely. Of the three powers claiming New World territory, Spain was officially Catholic, with church and state operating in unison. Spanish regions such as Florida, Texas, the Southwest, and California were colonized by soldiers and missionized by priests almost seamlessly. France also exported Catholicism by means of Jesuit missionaries throughout the Louisiana Territory.

However, the English presence in the Northeast assumed control of the American narrative in generations leading up to the Revolution. The Mayflower and subsequent ships brought all manner of Christian sects seeking freedom from the Catholic influence. Except for Maryland, the colonies were decidedly Protestant.

British law left its mark on the colonies. Public Mass was forbidden. So were Catholic schools. Catholics in Maryland were obliged to send their children to Europe for an education, since local schools were predominantly run by ministers whose biases were expressed in classroom worship and the curriculum. During the Revolutionary War, George Washington had to request special permission to permit Lafayette and his men access to priestly ministry. After independence was declared, only one Catholic signature was affixed to the document: Charles Carroll, whose brother John would become the first U.S. bishop.

Opposition didn't disappear after the new country was launched. The Know-Nothing Party was a secret society established a half-century later. Adherents received their peculiar name for their refusal to admit any knowledge of their organization. Their intention was to curb the Catholic population—which required keeping the Irish, Polish, Italians, and half the Germans from emigrating. They lobbied for a 21-year ban on immigration. Members were responsible for church, rectory, and convent burnings, and published scandalous accusations against church leaders. They also launched a presidential candidate, Millard Fillmore, in 1856. The Know-Nothing Party was replaced by the American Protective Association, which pledged to keep Catholics out of elected office, to curtail immigration, and to lengthen the period before naturalization. At its height, the APA had more than a million members and was influential until 1911.

Scriptures: Leviticus 33-34; Exodus 15:15; Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Job 31:19-22; Jeremiah 7:5-7; Malachi 3:5; Matthew 25:31-46



A SOWER WENT OUT TO SOW
MT. 13: 3

Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary

Ice Cream Social

Sunday, August 2, 2026

2:00pm—4:00pm



Ice Cream Sundaes

Cookies

Bingo

Basket Raffle

50/50 Raffle

Free Will Donation

St. James Church Hall (In Irwin)

4372 Main St, Kankakee, IL



MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

Monday, July 20, 2026

St. Lawrence Church

135 E. Rice Road in South Wilmington

4-5:30pm

(Or until food runs out)

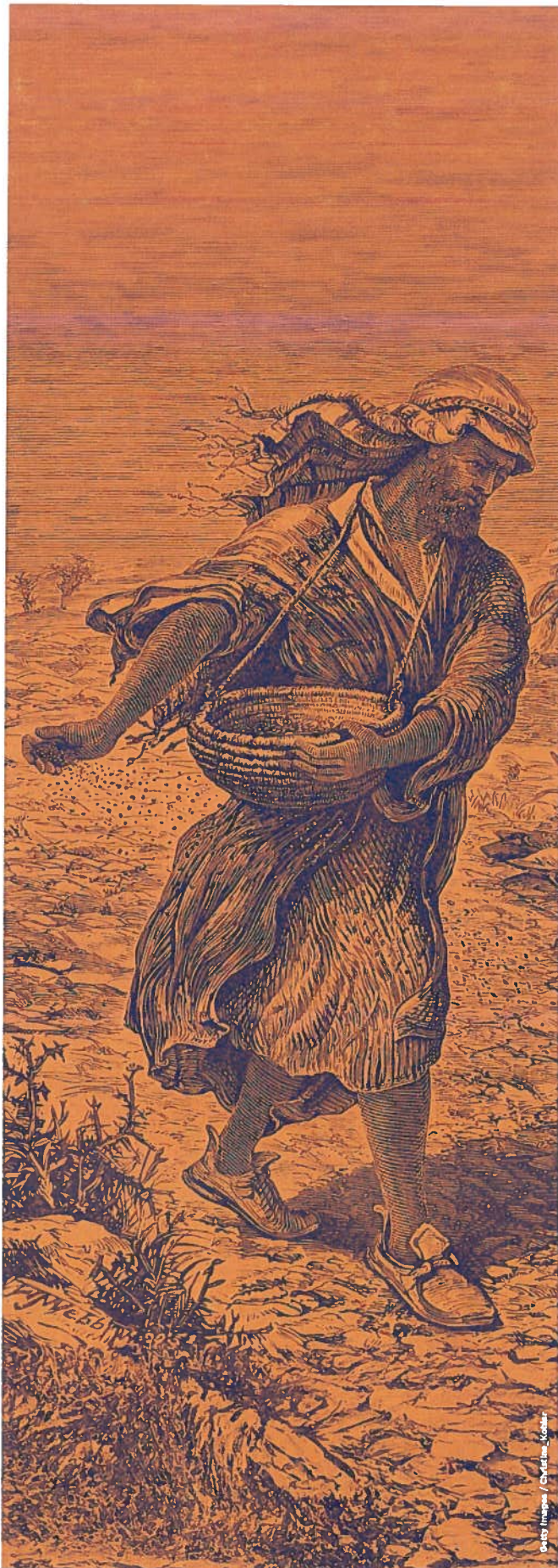
RAIN OR SHINE!

The Northern Illinois Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry delivers healthy food (meat, produce, and nonperishable items) to people in need. **No identification is required. This event is open to anyone in need of food!** Mobile Food Pantries use a "drive thru" method to distribute pre-packed groceries. Please clear space in your trunk or backseat so volunteers can load boxes of food directly into your vehicle.

This Mobile Food Pantry is sponsored by:
St. Lawrence Giving Tree Donors



Catholic Charities is a faith-based organization providing service to people



July 12, 2026

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Is 55:10-11 | Rom 8:18-23 | Mt 13:1-23

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

If you're anything like me, you probably hear today's Gospel and immediately try to identify yourself with one type of seed Jesus talks about: the seed that fell on the path, the seed that fell on rocky ground, the seed among thorns, or the seed in good soil. But have you ever stopped to wonder why the sower is throwing seeds so haphazardly? This is worth meditating on, too. I believe it says to us that God is generously offering his grace and his mercy to everyone equally, in all places, at all times. But we aren't all in a place where we are open to receive that gift. In those moments when we feel as though we're not bearing the fruit that we hope to, perhaps it's time to examine our spiritual surroundings and see if there is something we can change that might help us to be more receptive to God's grace. Perhaps it's as simple as checking out a faith-sharing group that can help us tend our spiritual soil so it is ready to receive what God is doling out.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Our first reading from Isaiah speaks of the power and efficacy of God's word, comparing it to the rain and snow that come down and water the earth, making the soil fertile, helping the seed to grow into a bountiful harvest that can be made into bread that nourishes. What we grasp from all of this is that God's word bears fruit *over time*. As evangelizers, it's important to consider that we often won't see fruit right away when sharing God's word with others. That word must take root, grow, and be cultivated. This process will take time, but the long-term fruit is worth our sustained and patient effort as we nurture relationships of accompaniment with others.

PRAY

There's a certain patience we must exercise when sharing God's word with others. When I find myself struggling with impatience – with myself or with others' slow progress – I often find solace in the prayer "Trust in the Slow Work of God" from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, particularly these lines: *Above all, trust in the slow work of God / We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay / We should like to skip the intermediate stages / And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability – and that it may take a very long time.*

SPIRITUALITY

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

R/. Alleluia, alleluia.
The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower.
All who come to him will have life forever.
R/. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Matt 13:1-23; L103A

On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea.

Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore.

And he spoke to them at length in parables, saying:

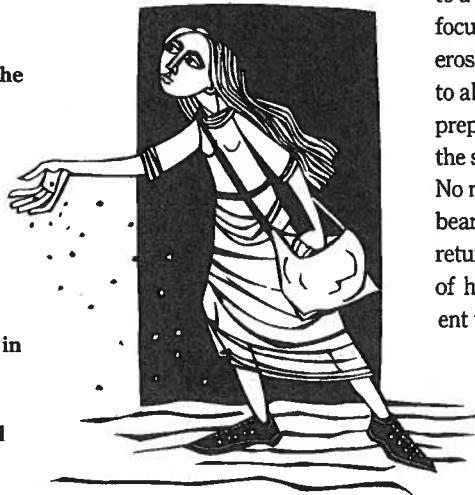
"A sower went out to sow.
And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up.
Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil.

It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots.
Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it.
But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.
Whoever has ears ought to hear."

The disciples approached him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted.

To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away.



Reflecting on the Gospel

The fastest growing religious denomination is "none." Among the almost 20 percent who do not identify themselves with any religion, approximately three-quarters were raised with a religion as children. The study prompts important questions: Why is this happening, and what can be done about it?

The Matthean community asked similar questions, as reflected in today's gospel. Why do some accept Jesus's interpretation of the law while others do

not? Like all Jesus's parables, the one in today's gospel is open to a variety of interpretations. If we take the sower as the focus, the parable invites us to reflect on the boundless generosity of God, who offers the Word, in the person of Jesus, to all in the hope of a fruitful response, no matter how poorly prepared to receive it some may seem to be. If we zero in on the seed, the parable assures us of the efficacy of the word. No matter what the yield, the seed itself is good, and it will bear fruit. If we take the harvest as the focus, the explosive return propels us into reflection on eschatological fulfillment of hopes beyond our wildest dreams. Finally, if the different types of soil are our focus, the parable urges effort to do everything possible to cull out obstacles and cultivate maximum receptivity to the word.

As Jesus's first followers struggled to understand why others did not respond as they did to Jesus's teaching, they turned to the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah articulates that this experience is repeated in the life of every prophet: Some people are disposed to see and hear

and respond positively to the prophet's message, while others close themselves off to the challenging word that could bring healing and that could free them to live life more fully in God's love. To explain the negative response by the latter, Isaiah puts the onus not on the prophet nor on the message, but on those who deliberately close themselves off to the prophet's words and actions.

In the gospel, Jesus explains that the ability to accept his teaching is a gift from God. What is given is "knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (v. 11).

While verses 11 and 12 explain that knowledge of the mysteries is God's gift, verses 13 to 17 emphasize human responsibility to cultivate receptivity so as to be able to respond as fully as possible to the gift. Some let the gift be snatched from them; some toss it aside in favor of something else that seems more alluring. The parable and its allegorical interpretation undercut any smugness or complacency on the part of those who have received the gift. The gospel invites us to shift our focus from wondering whether the "seed" is effective—it is!—or why others' soil is unreceptive, to the question of how those who have received the gift can be intent on helping prepare receptive soil and to continue the profligate and indiscriminate work of the Divine Sower, who eagerly shares the mysteries far and wide.

*Continued in Appendix A, p. 302, or
Matt 13:1-9 in Appendix A, p. 302.*