

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A – July 15, 2026

I grew up in a rural area; my father was a farmer. I used to watch him and others carefully preparing the fields, and I saw how much work went into each step. I know some of you also grew up on farms, so you know what farming is all about. I remember how carefully the land was prepared. The soil had to be plowed, the weeds removed, and the seed planted. Then the farmer waited patiently for the rain and sunshine. It always amazed me that such a tiny seed could produce an abundant harvest.

Jesus loved to teach using examples from everyday life. In today's Gospel, He tells us the story of a farmer sowing seed. His listeners immediately understood the image because they were familiar with farming.

Before we reflect on the Gospel, the first reading from Isaiah gives us a beautiful key to understanding it. Isaiah says:

“Just as the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return without watering the earth and making it fruitful, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty.”

What a beautiful promise! God's Word is never wasted. Every time we hear the Scriptures, every time we come to Mass, every time we pray, God is planting His Word in our hearts. His Word always has the power to transform lives.

The question is not whether God's Word is powerful. The question is: What kind of soil is my heart?

Jesus speaks about four kinds of soil. Sometimes our hearts become like the path—hard because of hurt, disappointment, or pride. Sometimes they are like rocky ground—we receive God's Word with enthusiasm, but when difficulties come, we lose heart. Sometimes our hearts are like thorny soil, crowded with worries, anxieties, possessions, and so many distractions that God's Word has little room to grow.

But Jesus invites us to become good soil.

A farmer knows that good soil does not happen by itself. It takes work. Stones have to be removed. Weeds have to be pulled out. The land must be cultivated. “

The same is true of our spiritual life.

The Lord asks us to remove the rocks of pride, the weeds of resentment, the thorns of worry and selfishness. Through daily prayer, reading the Scriptures, receiving the Eucharist, and

celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, God slowly prepares our hearts to receive His Word.

There is another beautiful lesson in today's Gospel.

Notice how generous the sower is. He scatters seed everywhere. A careful farmer would never throw seed on the path or among rocks and thorns. But God is different. He keeps sowing His grace, His mercy, and His love into every heart. He never says, "This person is beyond hope." He never gives up on us. Again and again, He gives us another opportunity to begin.

That is the mercy of God.

But God also asks for our cooperation. A seed is not a finished plant. It contains life, but it must be welcomed, nourished, and cared for if it is to bear fruit. In the same way, God's Word must not remain something we hear only on Sunday. It must become something we live every day.

Then there is one more lesson.

Once God's Word takes root in our hearts, we become sowers ourselves.

Parents sow faith in their children. Teachers sow wisdom. Grandparents sow love and good example. Every Christian is called to sow seeds of kindness, peace, hope, and forgiveness.

Someone once said that millions of trees have been planted by squirrels who buried nuts and seeds and then forgot where they buried them.

There is a wonderful lesson there.

Do good and forget about it.

Don't keep score.

Don't look for recognition.

Don't expect applause.

Simply keep sowing seeds of kindness. A smile, a word of encouragement, a visit to someone who is lonely, a phone call, an act of forgiveness—these are all seeds. We may never know how they touch another person's life, but God does. He gives the growth.

My brothers and sisters, in a short while, the deacon or priest will say, "The Mass is ended. Go in peace."

Those words are not simply telling us that Mass is over. They are sending us on a mission. We have received the seed of God's Word. Now we are sent into the world to sow that seed through the way we live.

And may we become generous sowers, spreading faith, hope, peace, and love wherever we go.

Then God's promise through the prophet Isaiah will be fulfilled: His Word will not return empty but will accomplish the purpose for which He sent it.
Amen.