

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 13:3-9*)

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 Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – The more we empty ourselves, the more fruitful we can be

Some bear thirtyfold (cf. Matthew 13:8). This group of believers bear some fruits but it is under the average. They have the potential to produce more. They accepted the Word of God as proclaimed to them but they are still of two minds. They are still attracted to the allure of the lights of the world and earthly treasures which hold an attraction for them. They are not willing to break completely the bondage to earthly things and pursuits which bear no reference to their salvation. A portion of their time and energy is frizzled away by trivial earthly pursuits. Thus, in trying to serve two masters, they have very little time to develop an interior life of prayer and sacrifice in order to forge a strong personal relationship with Christ. They cannot be more fruitful because their hearts and minds are still preoccupied with earthly things. *That you should put away the old self of your former way of life, corrupted through deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth (Ephesians 4:22-24).*

Some bear sixty fold (cf. Matthew 13:8). This group of believers hear the call to holiness and are endeavoring to answer it and to live lives that are befitting children of God. However, there are dark areas in their lives or hearts which they find it difficult to surrender to Christ. It is usually an attachment to sin which could take the form of a bad habit, a problematic relationship or sinful attitude or whatever thing, person or situation in the life of that soul which prevents the soul from receiving the full blessings of Christ.

Some bear hundred fold (cf. Matthew 13:8). This group of believers is mighty in the hands of God. Freed from the hold of self-love and pride, their only concern is that they carry out God's will every day. Like a good fruitful branch firmly joined to the vine, they enjoy a very close relationship with Christ. Christ takes delight in uniting Himself to them. *I am the Vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in Me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without Me you can do nothing (John 15:5).* They have the courage to let Christ take charge of their lives. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, they sincerely rid themselves of any flaws and sins that separate them from Christ. The presence of the Holy Spirit in them is strong. They can hear the inspirations of the Holy Spirit easily. They are not perfect but are striving by God's grace to be so as exhorted by our Lord to all of us. They have a strong personal relationship with Christ which overrides everything else in their lives. Thus, they are holy. Outwardly, they are simple, ordinary people in all walks of life. Like in the case of our Blessed Mother, their fruits are hidden and known only to God. Their lives can be summed up in one sentence: *the Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I lack (Psalm 23:1).* They take time to unite themselves to the daily Sacrifice of Christ in the Mass, the Eucharist, the source and summit of their Christian life. Always recalling and reflecting on the goodness of the Lord and His Passion, their hearts are prevented from growing lukewarm, and the Lord remains their first, overriding love. They understand the anguish and sorrows of the Sacred Heart, and like Anna, the prophetess (cf. Luke 2:36-37), they make constant reparation. They do not demand anything for themselves. The concerns of the Sacred Heart are their concerns. They are totally dependent on Christ, and their hearts harbor no unholy fear because they are filled with trust in God. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:3). Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land (Matt 5:5).*

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, the more I empty myself of my will, my pride, my self-love, my agenda, the more You can unite Yourself to me. How much fruits I can produce will depend on how well You can unite Yourself to me. You said You come so that we can have life abundantly (cf. John 10:10). Anoint me with Your Spirit of Truth so that I can see clearly all my flaws and the hidden sins in my soul. Give me the grace of true contrition. I surrender to You now all the areas in my life and heart that are in darkness and that have not been surrendered over to You. Please renew my heart, mind and spirit, and fill me with Your graces and favours. Fill my soul with a deep and abiding love for You and all that You represent. Fill my heart with an ardent desire to serve You faithfully always. Through the powerful intercession of my Blessed Mother Mary, and by imitating her faith and humility, may I become Your good instrument. Thus, I hope to attain the full potential You have created in me for the sole purpose of God's glory. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk