

St. Boniface

Catholic Church

stboniface@rrt.net

230 1st St. NW - Lidgerwood, ND 58053

Also Serving St. Martin of Tours, Geneseo and Sts. Peter & Paul, Cayuga

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saint Boniface

Saturday - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 a.m.

St. Martin of Tours - Geneseo

Sunday - 10:30 a.m.

(June and August)

Sts. Peter & Paul - Cayuga

Sunday - 10:30 a.m.

(July and September)

July 12, 2026 - 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Gardener and the Soil

I began writing this piece by googling "how do you make soil fertile?" which should tell you everything you need to know about my own abilities as a gardener.

I remember seeing a packet of seeds in the store one summer as a child and convincing my mother to buy them. They were delphiniums, which bloom into a beautiful cone shape if you know what you're doing. Alas, I didn't. I chose for my garden a particularly dry spot of earth right next to my backyard playset, scattered the seeds, congratulated myself, and went on my merry way. I returned occasionally to water the area, but only when I remembered to.

Nothing grew, not even a little sprout. I was more than heartbroken — my faith was shaken. I had planted these seeds! I had watered them! (A little.) There was sunlight! All my childhood books and rhymes said this was all you needed. Was it all a lie?

Of course it wasn't a lie. Seeds need soil, sunlight, water, and oxygen — good soil, adequate sunlight for whatever the plant is, and consistent water.

So what seeds need more than anything is a gardener. (At least, delphiniums do.)

When I hear the parable of the rich soil and the rocky ground in the Gospel of Matthew, I often miss the point. I think Jesus is trying to give me a message about how I should be. "Be better." That's what I think he's telling me.

I forget that I am only the soil. I cannot enrich myself; all my efforts to do so will come to nothing. What he is telling me is to ask the gardener: "Make me what I need to be."



15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

"The seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold." - Mt 13:23

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCC

GLP

Isaiah 55:10-11 | Romans 8:18-23
Matthew 13:1-23

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Weekly Mass Schedule



<u>Sunday Liturgies</u>		
Saturday, July 11	5:00 pm (St. B.)	† John Gaukler
Sunday, July 12	8:30 am (St. B.)	Shirley Ahrens
	10:30 am (Sts. P&P)	Pro Popula
<u>Weekday Liturgies</u>		
Monday, July 13	NO MASS	
Tuesday, July 14	NO MASS	
Wed., July 15	NO MASS	
Thurs., July 16	NO MASS	
Friday, July 17	10:00 am (St. B.)	† Randy Berntson
<u>Sunday Liturgies</u>		
Saturday, July 18	5:00 pm (St. B.)	Special Intention
Sunday, July 19	8:30 am (St. B.)	Ron Jelinek
	10:30 am (Sts. P&P)	Pro Popula

Reconciliation Schedule

St. Boniface: Saturday & Sunday – Before/after Mass

Thursday – after Mass

St. Martin: Sunday – Before and after Mass

Sts. Peter & Paul – Before and after Mass

Prayer Requests

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Tracey Monson - Lawrence Heley - Fr. Chad Wilhelm

Avery Trittin - Baby Weston - Anne Heley

Joan Moerke - Shirley (Art) Heley - Dan Frolek

Shirley Ahrens - Peggy Harles - Dan Schmit - If you

have any imminent prayer requests, please call or text

Cindy at 701-640-1401.

All Parishes

Eucharistic Adoration - Please come and spend time with Jesus on Thursdays in adoration, anytime from 5am – midnight. We need adorers to share the 2-3, 3-4 and 5-6pm slots. Please contact Sharon at 612-790-1211 or 538-7010 if you are able to help.

KC Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14 at 8pm.

Take the Parable of the Sower Test at Mass — and After – Tom Hoopes

This Sunday, the 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A, Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower, one of those Gospel stories that we feel like we know. After all, Jesus himself explains its meaning in the long form of

the Gospel — and to interpret it in any other way is foolhardy.

But the *application* of the parable is another matter.

First: The Parable of the Sower shows just what a great risk Jesus took, and how much depends on us.

“Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore,” says the Gospel. Today, a spot on the Sea of Galilee has been identified as Sower’s Cove, an indentation in a hill like a natural amphitheater by the sea. Remarkable demonstrations have been made about how Jesus’s words could be heard by a large number of people there.

Imagine what they saw: A grassy hill around them and Our Lord on a boat speaking from the sea. He is part of humanity, but separate; he is one of us and something else. He begins: “A sower went out to sow, and as he sowed, some seed fell on the path ... Some fell on rocky ground ... Some fell among thorns.”

This probably struck an ancient farm community the way it strikes Kansans today. We know better than to toss seed everywhere on paths, rocks and weeds — we know to plant seeds in rows on ploughed fields. But this Lord who addresses crowds from the water doesn’t do it that way — he gives his words of truth not just to his apostles and disciples, but also to stray people in the crowd who he has never met and will never meet again. Each time we go to Mass we gather together in a kind of Sower’s Cove like the one Jesus addressed. There are all kinds of people in the crowd, but the Word of God is given to all of us, indiscriminately.

He risks it on you and me. The question, then, is: Will we make his risk pay off, or waste the words he gives us?

Second: Jesus himself describes how we can tell if we are wasting what we are given or not.

Let’s review what Jesus says in the Gospel and ask, “Which describes me at this Mass?”

Jesus begins: “*The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the Kingdom without understanding it.*”

Our Lord’s first test at Mass is whether or not we actually listen to the Scriptures. Our minds wander — do we call them back? We become distracted — do we recollect ourselves? Jesus here gives his first advice: Tune back in. Don’t let the Word of God pass you by. Latch onto the words of the liturgy as lifelines to God. Next, he says: “*The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and lasts only for a time.*”

The second test is whether or not we *apply* the words at Mass to ourselves. We all know that, in human relationships, if we only listen to a friend when she’s

saying something funny or interesting, but not when she's saying something sad or challenging, we won't have that friend for very long. It's the same at Mass. We all hear things at Mass that we decide we aren't interested in, and we don't want to do the work to root them in our lives. "Do the work," says Jesus.

Then, Jesus says: *"The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit."*

The last test is whether or not you *act* on what you hear. Once you've actually heard the Word of God and admitted that it applies to you, it's necessary to *do* it, despite all obstacles and competing priorities. We will always have worries and attachments that keep us from acting. Clear them away.

If we do, he says, we will *"indeed bear fruit and yield a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."*

Third: But, if you go deeper, and take these ideas to their logical end, this parable reveals much more.

There is more at stake here than plants, and even more at stake than our personal enrichment at Mass.

Isaiah makes the connections in the First Reading. He knows God is love, and God exists outside of time and space, creating everything we see, have seen, or will see in nature. He is right now creating each field, flower, dewdrop, and seed. When we rejected God he was already acting to win us back, already going further than we can imagine.

Isaiah says it this way: "Just as from the heavens rain and snow come down ... so shall my word be." The Word of God is the Logos, the order of the cosmos. He comes to dwell on earth, and what does he do? He gives "seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats." He makes us partners in his work and gives us himself as the Bread of Heaven. And what will happen?

"My word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it," he says. Jesus himself calls these truths "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" and on Sunday, Psalm 65 spells them out. God "visited the land and watered it," and "prepared the grain" and "blesses its yield."

Fourth: In our Christian life we get a grace that goes far beyond the beauty of flowers and fruit, says St. Paul.

As beautiful as it is, all of nature will die, resolve itself into its elements, and fade away, "for creation was made subject to futility," he says. But not us. We are not subject to futility. Those baptized into Christ have been "set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God."

We, the baptized, reap "the first fruits of the Spirit." It's all over but the waiting — and the groaning. We "groan

within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies," says St. Paul.

As St. John Chrysostom points out, "The sower went out to sow," is a reference to Jesus who came to us in his incarnation. When Jesus talks about seeds, he wants us to think of his other seed analogies, especially the grain of wheat that is Christ himself.

Jesus will renew all of creation into a New Heavens and New Earth, but us first. We are the New Women, New Men, new creatures of his kingdom even now. We were made in the image of the God who stands at the center of all things, and his baptism washes away the old us so that we are "set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God."

If life is hard right now — and, as you no doubt have noticed, it is — "the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us."

Fifth: The ultimate lesson of the Parable of the Sower becomes apparent in the Eucharist.

Jesus is not just talking about how great the Sower story is when he says, "blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

What do we see that they longed to see? It is in front of us at every Mass: It is Jesus Christ, the true Messiah. And what does he look like? A round host, the fruit of a bunch of wheat plants, sown and grown and milled and baked.

He is the Divine Sower that became a seed who died and rose to become a bountiful harvest that is gathered into all the tabernacles of the world.

And what are we so blessed to hear that the prophets never heard? "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb."

That is what we see and hear. A sower went out to sow, and nothing will ever be the same.

