

Apostleship of the Sea Sea Sunday: 13th July 2008

Gospel Meditation and Bidding Prayers



Short meditation on the Gospel reading for 13th July 2008:

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Today's Gospel reading at Mass discusses the sowing of seeds. Seeds representing faith and love and how our faith and love can either grow or fade depending on how open our hearts are. We can all use the analogy of the seeds to examine our own faith and the development and strength of our love, to aim to be like seeds sown in 'good soil' that grow strong and healthy.

Today on Sea Sunday we can draw parallels to this gospel. Jesus told this parable whilst he was 'sitting in a boat', he talks of sowing seeds of love and faith. The Apostleship of the Sea, on behalf of parishes, you and I; sows seeds of love by welcoming seafarers to our shores and providing practical care and a hand of friendship. Seeds of faith are sown when AOS chaplains celebrate mass and the sacraments on board ship and provide pastoral care for visiting seafarers.

Part of what draws us to our faith and to our path is the wish to be in solidarity with others, to help others and to ensure their wellbeing. Today, Sea Sunday is a time to remember seafarers, a group of people who require your help and solidarity. The Apostleship of the Sea requires your continuous support in prayer and generous donation in today's second collection to enable it to carry on with its mission, and to help its seeds grow.

Introduction

13 That same day, Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, ²but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the shore, ³and he told them many things in parables.

Parable of the sower

He said, 'Listen, a sower went out to sow. ⁴As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up at once, because there was no depth of earth; ⁶but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. ⁷Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Anyone who has ears should listen!'

The parable of the sower explained

¹⁸So pay attention to the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the Evil One comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the seed sown on the edge of the path. ²⁰The seed sown on patches of rock is someone who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. ²¹But such a person has no root deep down and does not last; should some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, at once he falls away. ²²The seed sown in thorns is someone who hears the word, but the worry of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so it produces nothing. ²³And the seed sown in rich soil is someone who hears the word and understands it; this is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'

Suggested Sea Sunday bidding Prayers

- Today on Sea Sunday we pray for the Church, for our Holy Father Pope Benedict, for our bishops, priests and deacons, and for all the baptised. We ask God to help us keep our faith strong. **Lord hear us.**
- Let us pray for all those in positions of power and authority in the world, the governments and the politicians, may they use their influence to protect the vulnerable and needy. **Lord hear us.**
- Let us pray for all those on the margins of society: the poor, prisoners, the unborn and the elderly. We pray for the Apostleship of the Sea and its mission to support seafarers who work far from their homes and families, for those who are sick or have been injured in accidents, and for those who are ill-treated. **Lord hear us.**
- We pray for our own community and for everyone living in our area, especially for anyone who is in need. We remember all seafarers and their families, and ask God to comfort those who feel lonely and far from loved ones. **Lord hear us.**

Let us invoke the intercession of Our Lady, Star of the Sea.

Hail Mary...