



**AMDG**  
**15TH SUNDAY IN**  
**ORDINARY TIME**  
**YEAR A**  
**16TH JULY 2017**



**Christ sows the seed**

**OPENING PRAYER**

O God, who show the light of your truth  
to those who go astray,  
so that they may return to the right path,  
give all who for the faith they profess  
are accounted Christians  
the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ  
and to strive after all that does it honour.

In today's First Reading, from the prophet Isaiah, we are encouraged by the effectiveness of God at work in the world through his word.

The Second Reading shows the eagerness of creation, which awaits God's gifts of freedom, growth and purpose. As St Paul reminds us, we, too, possess the first-fruits of the Holy Spirit.

These are recurring themes. The Psalm speaks of the abundance of creation through the care of the Creator. The Gospel reveals that same Creator (as a sower) seeking a rich soil that will produce a good crop.

Perhaps, this week, we can renew our commitment to the way of Christ, and to remember the freedom and glory that we enjoy as children of God. We might also carry with us the words of the Gospel acclamation: 'Speak Lord, your servant is listening; you have the message of eternal life'.

## FIRST READING: ISAIAH 55: 10-11

Thus says the Lord:

‘As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.’

I come to my place of prayer and settle here gently. I take my time to become aware of the presence of God. I make a slow sign of the cross and quietly become still.

I read, very slowly, this text from the great prophet Isaiah. I pause over any words or phrases that seem to resonate within. I hold and savour them. Why this particular line ... why this particular word? Is the Lord ‘carrying out his will’ in me at this very moment? I stop to ponder...

I may feel drawn to reflect on the words ‘watering’ and ‘giving growth’. When, in my life, have I experienced this nurturing activity of the Lord? Perhaps the Lord’s watering is so gentle and unnoticed it may require me to pause regularly, and take note with the help of the Spirit.

Maybe something about the ‘success’ of the Lord’s work catches my attention. Do I have a sense of a time when the Lord’s will was being done in me?

Perhaps, in these prayerful moments, I can give thanks for those times when the Lord’s word did not return to him ‘empty’, but ‘full’ ... from having worked in the soil of my life.

At the close of my prayer I end with a slow ‘Glory be ...’

## **GOSPEL: MATTHEW 13: 1-23 (SHORTER FORM)**

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

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

As I come to my place of prayer I pause to take note of how I am. What sort of mood am I in? Whatever my sense of self, I give it to the Lord in trust. I know I can come as I am. I don't have to pretend. I read the text prayerfully. I may feel a little shallow today or, perhaps, choked by the demands of life. Maybe I feel tempted, at times, to remain 'at the edge'. But however I feel, I continue to trust.

I read the text prayerfully, again, and allow the Lord who loves me with an everlasting love to touch me.

If there is any hardness to the soil of my life, can I let the touch of the Sower soften it?

Where do I sense there may be weeds or thorns?

Again, I hand over these areas of my life to the one who loves me.

Perhaps I am also conscious of a richness and a depth to my life.

Where do I have a sense of these fertile places? I thank the Lord for them.

What is the seed that the Lord wishes to plant with – or within – me?

If I can, I share this with the Lord now, and offer him my willingness to accept that seed and help it flourish.

## Here's a text if you've only got a minute...

The word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty. *First Reading*

Your river in heaven brims over to provide its grain. *Psalm*

Creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth. *Second Reading*

Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop. *Gospel*

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:

*Isaiah 55: 10–11; Psalm 64 (65); Romans 8: 18–23;*

*Matthew 13: 1–23*



“The Sower” Kew Gardens

How does this image help me meditate on these readings?



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH  
IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

Prepared by St Beuno's Outreach in the Diocese of Wrexham

JESUIT  
Ministries



LDS