

PENTECOST 7 – 07.12.2026 – FR. JOHN WARFEL

Some seeds fell on a well-worn path
Other seeds fell on rocky ground
Still others fell among thorns
and some fell on good soil.

This is an easy one. Or is it?
Seemingly simple parables are often deceptive
There's more to simple parables than meets the eye
Simple parables make us think
Jesus teaches in parables precisely to make us think

So it's best to approach parables from many different angles,
especially when their interpretations seem obvious.
Even when he explains a parable to us,
as he does in today's gospel.
Jesus wants us *to think, to ponder, to speculate.*

Hear again the parable of the sower:
A sower went out to sow
first he sows seeds along a well-worn path,
but the birds come and snatch them up

Jesus explains that this is like the new believer,
who hears the word of God but doesn't understand it,
and the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart

Next the sower sows seeds on rocky ground.
Although the seedlings spring up quickly, they soon wither and die-
because there's not enough soil to feed and anchor their roots.

Jesus tells us that this is like the newly initiated enthusiast,
who loses interest the moment things get tough.
Faced with challenge or struggle, her enthusiasm withers
and she seeks an easier, more attractive way

Next the sower sows seeds among thorns-
but the thorns grow up and choke the seedlings

This is the person, Jesus says, who hears the word,
but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth, position and power-
choke the word and the seedlings droop and die

Finally, the sower sows seeds in good soil
these seeds yield a bountiful harvest
This is the one, Jesus says, who hears the word,
understands it, embraces it and lives it out in his/her life

Straight forward enough...right?
Naturally we want to be among these last seeds
the seeds planed in good soil,
not in rocky soil or thorny soil or soil along the path.

But what if this parable isn't about the seeds;

Seeds that don't understand
Or fickle, fair-weather seeds,
or seeds that give into the cares of the world or the lure of wealth
What if this parable is about the sower, not the seeds?

If the sower is God,
what does this parable tell us about the nature of God?

A God who lavishes the earth with seed?
A God who spreads the seed with a careless, wasteful abundance?
A God who pours out seed everywhere, regardless of the soil conditions,
not caring a hoot about the outcome.
Just spreading, sowing, showering seed with joyful abandon?

Now we're getting somewhere
This is exactly how God sows love:
recklessly generous, without the slightest concern for waste
But with the certainty that the Divine supply of love is limitless

If we can shift our focus from the seeds
The successful seeds, the seeds that get it right
the seeds bearing fruit yielding 30, 60, 100 fold

If we shift our focus from the seeds-
and look back at the sower,
we get a glimpse of another take on this parable.

It's not about numbers.
It's not about planting seeds in the right soil
This parable is about a God who sows love lavishly, recklessly, wastefully

Here we have it:
God's example of how we are to love – lavishly, recklessly wastefully,
loving as if there is no limit to our ability, our desire to love

Are we afraid that our love will run out?
Do we hoard our love for good soil-
or do we throw it about in endless circles,
knowing in our hearts that the supply of love is inexhaustible?

If we just understood evangelism in that light,
If we sowed love *wastefully*, as God does,
if we spread the seeds of intimacy with Jesus Christ-
without regard to the success or failure of the harvest.....

We would be in an entirely different place
Our parish, our community, our nation would, more and more,
reflect the Kingdom of God; the Reign of God

I'll end with a verse of my favorite Paul Overtreet song
Sowin' Love

I used to love to walk behind my Daddy (sung)
As he plowed our garden every spring

My little bare feet in the dirt would make me happy
As he talked about that harvest time would bring

He'd say "Son this whole world is like a garden,
and what you sow you're surely gonna reap
where bitter seeds are planted, hearts will harden
but a caring hand will make the harvest sweet"

And He was sowing love...for the family
He was sowing love...he took a little extra time
Looking forward to a bountiful harvest
Like a good father does...he was sowing love