



17th Sunday Ord. Time Yr A

Lectio Divina

Lectio: Our text is the last 3 of the 7 Parables of the Kingdom in the Gospel of Matthew. First was the Sower – this gives the overall picture of the Kingdom i.e. God is sowing seeds of the Kingdom (namely, the Word of God) in our world that we can use or not use these ‘seeds’. The next 3 parables tell of the dynamism of the Kingdom: the Darnel in the Wheat – points out that the Kingdom exists among other kingdoms; the Mustard Seed and the Yeast, point out that the Kingdom begins small yet, slowly but surely, changes everything for the good. Our text’s three parables tell of the opportunity, not to be missed, that the Kingdom offers. Are we going to let our hearts be occupied by the inadequate pleasures of the kingdoms of this world? Or are we seeking the Kingdom of God which brings true and eternal fulfilment?

Our text finishes with the crowds saying they have understood all the Parables. As they remember the words of the Parables, these words become a ‘storehouse’ of meanings for a true disciple. After our text, Vs 53, Jesus leaves the boat and the people on the shore; will the teachings of the Parables of the Kingdom ‘sink in’?

Note: The Parables come after Jesus’ family not understanding him (Mt 12:46) and conclude (Mt 13:57) with his family not accepting him – they couldn’t see beyond appearances. Can we see the meaning of the Kingdom of God underpinning the words of the Parables?

Read: **Matthew 13: 44 – 52**

Meditatio: In what ways is the Kingdom a treasure to me? What have I changed, or given up doing, for the sake of the Kingdom? Consider what God has done for me in Christ Jesus – he loves me, I am a treasure of his; one of his fine pearls! What limits do I put on my openness to the Kingdom? Am I aware of being drawn into the Kingdom, being caught up by the ‘dragnet’? Am I one of the ‘good ones’ i.e. I make good use of the ‘seeds of the Kingdom’, the Word of God? In me, has the Word of God ‘produced fruit’, i.e. been useful, for the Kingdom? Can I see that the ‘fishermen’ are God’s workers, the angels? What are angels to me? Do the Parables help me understand the Kingdom? Is there still more for me to know about the Kingdom of God? Am I a disciple of the Kingdom? Is my ‘household’, (the Church), the people of the Kingdom? Do I use the resources of the Church?

Oratio: Pray for a love of the gift of the Kingdom of God. Pray for the coming of God’s Kingdom. Pray for an appreciation of God’s great love for each of us. Pray for all God is doing for us – sowing seeds of the Kingdom, sending his Son as our Saviour. Pray for the happiness of discovering the enduring value of the Kingdom. Pray that the meanings of the Parables of the Kingdom will ‘sink in’ and change our lives and our world for the good. Pray for the ‘household’ of the Kingdom i.e. the Church. Pray that the living traditions of the Church will be valued. Pray for a vitality in the Church despite the restrictions on us.

Contemplatio – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

After your prayer – Take time to reflect on what occupies your life; is it what you truly seek?

✍ Fr Joe

Matthew 13: 44 – 52

Jesus said to the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

['Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

'Have you understood all this?' They said 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.']

[Short Form: omit text in brackets.]

Vs 53 "When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place."

Vs 54 "He went to his hometown ..."