



15th Sunday Ord. Time Yr A

Lectio Divina

Lectio: Our text begins the 3rd Discourse (i.e. set of teachings) in Matthew's Gospel – the Parables of the Kingdom. There is the 1st Discourse on the mountain – Jesus' teachings to the people in general, then the 2nd Discourse of instructions to the Twelve. Chapter 12 is a connecting section which raises issues which challenge the religious authorities. Jesus says he is Lord of the Sabbath and proves this by the cure of the man with the paralyzed hand. The authorities are closed to believing in Jesus and start to challenge Him. Jesus moves on to criticize the disunity of the authorities. Even his mother and relatives were confused and wanted to speak with Jesus. In our text, the start of Chapter 13, Jesus, aware that his listeners were preoccupied with political matters, uses parables that explain about the Kingdom of God i.e. in words/stories that would not be reported to Herod or the Romans as sedition. The Kingdom of God is not an alternative political system being proposed to oppose the political status quo of the times.

Read: **Matthew 13: 1 – 23**

Meditatio: Am I eagerly seeking to know Jesus and to understand his teachings? Can I visualize the scene of Jesus in the boat and the people listening to him on the beach? What places help me listen better to Jesus, in a cosy corner, on the beach, on a mountain, in a church or ... ? How important is the Word of God to me? Do I hear it but not listen to it? I have heard the parables many times; am I open to what the Lord is saying to me NOW as I reflect on this text? Have I had times when the Word of God '*really spoke to me*'; what was the text? The word of God is like a seed, what has grown in me from my listening to (soaking in) the Word of God? What words/understandings are weeds for me i.e. blocking my openness to the Word of God? Am I ready to '*be converted*' i.e. to change my life through understanding (taking in) the Word of God? Do I turn to the Word of God when my faith or understanding of life is challenged? What blessings have I received through listening to God's Word?

Oratio: Pray for an openness to the Word of God. Pray for those who are closed to listening to Jesus and to believing in him. Pray for a love of the Word of God. Pray for conversion of yourself and others. Pray that the Word of God will be a guide through challenging times. Pray for the healing power of the Word of God.

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

After your prayer – Take time in your special place with your Bible. Reflect on one or more of the Parables in Mt Ch 13. ✍ Fr Joe

Matthew 11: 25 – 30

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such 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!'

[Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?' 'Because' he replied 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you, but they are not revealed to them. For anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So in their case this prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled:

You will listen and listen again, but not understand, see and see again, but not perceive. For the heart of this nation has grown coarse, their ears are dull of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, for fear they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and be converted and be healed by me.

'But happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

'You, therefore, are to hear the parable of the sower. When 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 man who received the seed on the edge of the path. The one who received it on patches of rock is the man who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But he has no root in him, he does not last; let some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, and he falls away at once. The one who received the seed in thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this world and the lure of riches choke the word and so he produces nothing. And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'

[Short Form: omit text in brackets.]