

“Service for the Kingdom of God”

Last week, we looked at the effect of faith and obedience to God. This week Jesus gives us two similar parables about the kingdom of God. To us, we do not know how this kingdom or Church grows like the seed scattered on the land or the planted mustard seed, because the growth can only happen through the grace of the Holy Spirit.

The first parable could be interpreted as: The land in the parable, represents the world. The man doing the service of scattering the seed, who by the way, does not know how they grow, represents those who are charged with spreading the Good News. The man also represent angels who would harvest the grain at harvest time.

The grain from the harvest are those who will enter the kingdom of God. The man and the angel are both servants of God, so the key word for us is service. The soil or the land which provide the nutrient for the growth of the seed, are the teachings of Jesus and the Sacraments He left us.

The farmer who planted the seed would be doing the most difficult work. Once the hard work of planting the seed is done, the man can look forward to harvesting day. And the day of harvest makes him forget about the bad days of back breaking work of sowing the seed.

Today is father's day and we would like to thank all fathers who can be compared to farmers in Jesus' parable. Please allow me to limit my analogy of Jesus' parable to fathers only. As we know, without mothers, we would not have fathers!

Fathers start out with raising their children by being good role models. They instruct them in the word of God making sure they receive the Sacraments which confer graces upon their children. These leads to good harvest for the kingdom of God when the kids are grown. However, fathers can only do what they are supposed to do by the grace of God so fathers do not fully comprehend how their kids grow in the knowledge of God.

Jesus' second parable was meant to encourage His disciples about the work they would have to do in building the kingdom of God or the Church. Jesus used the mustard seed as the smallest of seeds to explain to them that the Church He would build upon Peter, at the beginning, would be small. However, as their successors and those who are baptized spread His gospel, the Church would grow to become the largest of plants with large branches in service of His people.

Jesus' message to us is, the main purpose of the Church as the body of Christ is to serve. This image is what Jesus gave us with the birds of the sky enjoying the shade of the largest plant which means, people of every nation would be soaking up the goodness of God through His Church.

God in creating us, was not out of necessity for our service. He created us so He could pour out His blessings upon us. Our service adds nothing to God. His blessings that He desires to pour on us are immortality, eternal life, and eternal glory. Yes, in His infinite goodness and mercy, God desires service from us so He can confer benefits on those who persevere in serving Him.

Sometimes in our lives we will have bad days. Just as any father in raising his children would. When we do, we can look back on some past experience and remember that God pulled us through them. Jesus told us, His Father is always working. So, as we persevere in this life, that realization should give us encouragement in the present and hope for the future. Our focus should be that God's promise of a bountiful harvest is worth any struggles we might go through in this life.

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us resolve that we will persevere in our service to Him.