



## **Fifteenth Week in the Ordinary Time**

This Sunday in Matthew's gospel, Jesus uses the familiar imagery of the sower and the seed. He presents different possibilities for the growth of the seed that is sown. This lesson speaks clearly of God's gift of freedom and the potential for hearing the Word and doing good. Ultimately, choices rest with an individual who receives the precious gifts from God and are left to use or waste what has been given. The Lord Jesus offers to all of us everything necessary to follow Him according to God's plan.

Look around our world today. Since the time of Jesus, billions of people have heard His message and for different reasons have rejected His invitation to follow Him. Even before the Incarnation, God has through His prophets invited all people to enter into a covenant relationship with Him based upon love and fidelity. Time and again people have rejected the invitation and chosen their own way to live out their lives. One thing common to those not following His plan is certain failure. To live without a relationship with the Lord is to isolate oneself from the only path to true happiness and peace.

Jesus refers to those who do not understand the message from God and are confused by the evil one. Others hear the message receiving it with joy but soon walk away from it. The world and its lure distract still others from hearing the Word and following it. Finally, He points to the person who hears the Word, takes it in, and lives by it. This person is promised a rich yield at harvest time.

The message of this gospel calls us to examine our own potential for following the Lord and the freedom we possess in doing so. We choose to follow Christ. He does not force Himself on us but asks us to choose Him in freedom. That choice leads to life.

Peace,

**Fr. Robert**