

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Today, the Gospel begins with a simple but powerful invitation. Before Jesus relates the Parable of the Sower He says: “Listen!” After He finishes, He concludes with the words: “Let anyone with ears listen!” Jesus is not simply asking people to hear His voice, He is inviting them to receive His Word with an open heart.

In the original Greek, the word for “listen” is *akouō*, which means much more than hearing; it is to listen attentively, to understand, to accept, and to respond. True listening always leads to action and transformation. That is why St. Paul says: “Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.” (Romans 10:17) Listening is the beginning of faith.

Jesus also says: “My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.” Notice the order: they hear, they know, and they follow. Real listening always changes the way we live. St. James, similarly, encourages us to “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” The Parable of the Sower is not really about different kinds of seed. The seed is always the same: the Word of God. The Sower is always generous. God never stops sowing His grace. The only difference is the condition of the soil, which represents our hearts. Today, Jesus asks each one of us: What kind of soil is your heart? Has your heart become hard like the path? Shallow like the rocky ground? Choked by worries and distractions like the thorny soil? Or is yours the good soil that welcomes God’s Word and allows it to bear abundant fruit?

The First Reading gives us great hope. Through the prophet Isaiah, God says: “My word shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose.” Just as rain quietly waters the earth and produces a rich harvest, God’s Word silently transforms every heart that welcomes it.

The Second Vatican Council beautifully teaches: “In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet His children and talks with them.” (Dei Verbum, 21)



Whenever we open the Bible, we are not simply reading a book; we are listening to our loving Father speaking to us. This is why St. Jerome famously said: “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” If we truly want to know Jesus, we must spend time with His Word. St. Augustine beautifully puts it this way: “When you read the Scriptures, God speaks to you; when you pray, you speak to God.”

Dear friends, although we read, hear, and see God’s Word every day, *unless* it enters our hearts, it remains only information. God’s Word is meant to be an encounter with Christ that transforms our thoughts, our relationships, and our daily lives. Today, Jesus leaves us with one simple question: Am I merely hearing the Word, or am I truly listening? May the Holy Spirit make our hearts good soil, so that the seed of God’s Word may be deeply rooted in us to transform and to bear thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold fruit in our lives.

Dear brothers and sisters, Jesus concludes today’s Gospel with a challenge that echoes through all generations: “Let anyone with ears listen.”

The question is not do we have ears; we all do. The real question is, do we have listening hearts?

Do we merely hear the Gospel, or do we allow it to change us?

Do we simply admire Jesus’ words, or do we live them?

Do we leave behind the Word inside the church, or do we carry it into our homes, workplaces, schools, and daily relationships?

If we truly desire to become the good soil in today’s Gospel, there are four simple but essential steps:

First: cultivate inner silence. Before God can speak to us, we must quieten the noise within us. Our lives are filled with distractions, worries, endless conversations, and constant activity. We need moments of silence each day. As the Psalm says: “Be still, and

know that I am God.” Silence is not the absence of God; it is the space where God speaks most clearly to our souls.

Second: listen attentively to the Word of God. Read the Scriptures slowly and prayerfully.

Do not rush. Listen not only with your ears but with your heart. Ask: “Lord, what are You saying to me today?” The Father continues to meet His children and speak with them through the Sacred Scriptures.

Third: ruminate on the Word. Like a seed buried in fertile soil, the Word must remain in our hearts. Meditate on it throughout the day. Repeat a verse that touched you. Carry it into your work, your family life, and your prayer. Allow the Holy Spirit to deepen its meaning. Do as Our Lady did: “Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.” The ancient Christian tradition calls this *Lectio Divina*; allowing God’s Word to penetrate the heart until it becomes part of us.

Finally: live the Word. The Gospel is not complete until it becomes action. God’s Word should shape our decisions, our relationships, our forgiveness, our generosity, and our love. When we live according to God’s inspiration, our lives naturally bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Then the seed truly produces a harvest - thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

Jesus continues to sow His seed generously. He never gives up on us. He believes that every heart can become good soil through His grace. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to quieten our hearts, open our ears, deepen our meditation on God’s Word, and give us the courage to live what we hear. Then, the Word we hear will become the life we live. May we not simply hear with our ears but listen with our hearts. May every encounter with Scripture become an encounter with the living Christ. And may our lives bear fruit: thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold for the glory of God.

A preacher once said: “The more worn the Bible, the more fruitful the life.”