

Biblical Overview

by Greg Sunter

Read carefully the first three verses in today's parable and notice the kinetic image Matthew paints:

13.1: Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside.

13.3: Imagine a sower going out to sow.

Jesus and the sower moved physically from wherever they were, and moved into action. Jesus preached and the sower sowed seeds. Don't miss the direct command 'Imagine', which Jesus gives the great crowd. The verbs are all action verbs. We will never know if Matthew had a double meaning in the action of Jesus preaching, thus sowing seeds for thought and the sower sowing seeds for harvest. If Matthew didn't have that interpretation in mind, he should have. It works.

There is no guarantee that all the seeds will come to fruition – some seeds were eaten by birds, some seeds fell on rocky grounds. (Just read the parable and you'll get the idea.)

There is no record of the success rate of how many people were converted and followed Jesus after his parable telling.

Drawing a comparison between Jesus sowing the seeds of conversion and the sower scattering seeds provides another dimension that seems to be an underlying base for both: after the sowing of the words, conversion would continue, but probably not one hundred percent. What becomes of the sowing of words and seeds, really, is in the hands of God. Revealing the kingdom is not the same as embracing and living in the kingdom. We do the groundwork (no pun intended), but primarily and ultimately it is God's doing. All depends on the mercy of God.

Isaiah's final sentence in the second reading says it all: 'The word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

It's here!

15-20 July 2008

wyd2008.org



Reflection

by Dianne Bergant CSA

The readings for this Sunday call us to self-examination. The gospel describes various levels of receptivity, the willingness to allow ourselves to receive from another, to be influenced by another, perhaps even to be transformed. The more independent we are, the less likely we will be open to others and, consequently, less receptive to their ideas. By definition disciples are receptive to the one they follow. To be a disciple of Jesus requires receptivity, so it is important that we scrutinise ourselves to discover the extent to which we are open. To what should we be receptive? To the words of Scripture, the words of the liturgy, the words of the sacraments, the living tradition of the community. God's word is sown in many forms and under many guises. It makes little difference who sows the seed. How will we receive it?

Besides the word of God, the readings speak of the world of God. The people of biblical times were aware of the revelation of God in and through the natural world. Isaiah teaches about the effectiveness of the word of God through the metaphor of rain. The psalmist uses the natural world to describe God's work of salvation. Paul claims that eschatological fulfilment will include all of creation. Finally, Jesus' parables are rooted in stories about nature. We cannot afford to close our eyes to the needs of the natural world, or stop our ears to the cries of the earth, or harden our hearts to the world of which we are a part, for the word of God will accomplish the end for which God sent it.

The WYD Papal Mass will be shown on SBS TV from 10am

Our Sunday Word

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

nowraparish.org.au

15th Sunday (Year A) ~ Season of the Year

13 July 2008

First Reading

55:10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 64

R/ The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

1. You care for the earth, give it water, you fill it with riches. Your river in heaven brims over to provide its grain. (R.)
2. And thus you provide for the earth; you drench its furrows, you level it, soften it with showers, you bless its growth. (R.)
3. You crown the year with your goodness. Abundance flows in your steps, in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. (R.)
4. The hills are girded with joy, the meadows covered with flocks, the valleys are decked with wheat. They shout for joy, yes, they sing. (R.)

Second Reading

8:18-23

A reading from St Paul to the Romans

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the

beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan

inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Mt 11:25

Alleluia, alleluia! The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower; all who come to him will live for ever. Alleluia!

Gospel

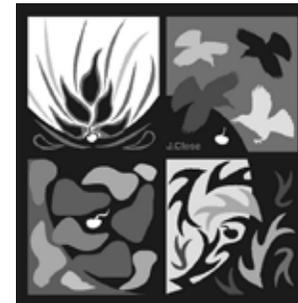
13:1-23 (1-9 below)

The holy Gospel according to Matthew

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!'

The Gospel of the Lord.



! Remember - no 9.30am Mass in Bomaderry next Sunday

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Website: nowraparish.org.au Incorporates the Church Communities of St Michael, Nowra; St Patrick, Berry Sacred Heart, Bomaderry; Mary, Help of Christians, Culburra; St Joseph, Kangaroo Valley; Holy Spirit, Vincentia.

15th Sunday (of the Church Year (A))

13 July 2008

SUNDAY Masses:

NOWRA 6pm Vigil; 8am, 9.30am & 6pm
BERRY: 8.00am **BOMADERRY:** 9.30am
CULBURRA 6pm Vigil
VINCENTIA 6pm Vigil, & 9.30am
KANGAROO VALLEY 11.00am

MASSES DURING THE WEEK

Nowra: Mon 7.00am, Tues/Wed/Thurs 8.15am, Fri 7am & 11.30am, Sat 9.00am
Morning Prayer: Wed 7.50am; **Holy Hour** Fri 10.30am
Berry: Tues 5.30pm Culburra: Thurs 5.30pm
Bomaderry: First Friday only 5.45pm – 4 July
Vincentia: Mon, Thur, Fri 8.00am, Tues /Wed 5.30pm
S'haven Heads; Friday Mass resumes on Fri Jul 25th.
Kangaroo Valley: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Sat 8.00am; Wed 6.15am. No Mass on Fridays.
 On Sunday July 20th (Papal Mass in Sydney) - No 9.30am Mass at Bomaderry; & the 9.30 am at Nowra brought forward to 9.15.a.m.

Confession/Reconciliation

Nowra: Sat 11.30-12.30pm. 5.00 - 5.30pm
Culburra: Sat. 5.30pm. **Berry:** Tues 6.00pm
B'derry: 1st Fri. 5.15pm. **K'Valley:** Sat 4.30 – 5.00pm
Vincentia: Sat 5.00pm – 5.30pm

PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES –Receipts will be available at all Mass Centres from 19/20 July. Receipts will **not** be posted out systematically.



We prayerfully remember: **Ray Mitchell** (Berry) (B'derry), **Wendy Vane-Tempest**, (Vincentia) Also **Val Warbutton, Moya McCabe, Elsie Weston, Milka Lipec, and Mary Rouen** and all whose anniversaries occur at this time. *May they rest in eternal peace.*

MARRIAGE ANNIVERSARIES MASS 2008. If you are celebrating 25,40,50 or 60 years of marriage and would like an invitation to the Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Peter at the Cathedral on Sun 10 August, we encourage you to please contact Helen – 4253 0934 or email helen.bennett@dow.org.au

THE BUS TO THE PAPAL WYD MASS will leave the Parish Centre at 5.00am on Sun 20 July and pick up in Berry at 5.15am. You will need to take warm clothing; all weather protection; blanket/chair; food and drink. You will be told when dropped off where and when to meet the bus for the return journey.

THE W'GONG DIOCESAN COUNCIL FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES & THEIR FAMILIES has organised a satellite viewing of the WYD Papal Mass on Sun 20 July in the Parish Hall – doors will open at 9.45am for the 10.00am Mass – a direct telecast via SBS. Parishioners who are unable to get to Sydney are also invited to take this opportunity to view the Mass on a 'big screen'

“COME & SEE” Spirituality Program for men and women will next meet Wed 16 July at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre – followed by supper (please bring a plate of finger food to share). The focus for July is “Listening as Spiritual Awareness”. Contact Moira 4423 6077 or Liz 4422 1279.



This Saturday July 12th marks the 15th Episcopal ordination anniversary of Bishop Peter Ingham. Bishop Peter was appointed to the Wollongong Diocese in July 2001. May the Lord abundantly bless and sustain his in his pastoral ministry.

WYD REUNION: PICS AND FLICKS – Take part in this photo and film competition to celebrate World Youth Day 2008, on Fri 19 Sept 6.00pm to 9.30pm at the McKinnon Theatre, University of W'gong. Submit your seven minute film or photograph by the 29 Aug. Competition and event details are found at www.youth.dow.org.au

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF LIFE TALK – Fri 15 August, 7pm in the Parish Hall. Paul Hanrahan and Gail Instance from Human Life International in Sydney will be guest speakers... More details will follow later. **Please note this date in your diary.**

PRAYERS FOR WORLD YOUTH DAY

God, our Father, we dedicate to you World Youth Day 2008. Bless all who are preparing for it and grant us a New Pentecost. We entrust to you the young people of our diocese, our nation and our world. Through the World Youth Day journey may they come to know Jesus more intimately. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit may they commit themselves to follow Jesus more closely and show his presence in their personal lives and chosen vocations. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.



I wish on behalf of St Michael's Parish to sincerely thank the many parishioners who have so magnanimously opened their homes to our overseas pilgrims. 180 in all - 120 from 9 parishes of the Archdiocese

of Denver; 10 from Paterson,USA; and from the Scottish dioceses, 26 from Galloway and 24 from Motherwell. The pilgrims are a joyful and grateful group of people.

A sincere apology also to a number of parishioners whose offers to host pilgrims could not be met. This was due to circumstances that only became evident with the arrival of the pilgrims – e.g. married couples, family and parish connections.

We genuinely regret any disappointment and inconvenience caused by eleventh hour alterations.

We pray that WYD will be a joyful, harmonious and spiritually enriching event....Fr P. Faherty

YOU ARE ALL AWARE OF THE EFFORTS OF THE YOUNG ADULT GROUP in raising funds towards financially assisting, young people of the Parish attend World Youth Day. With the various fundraising activities they have organised including the Gingerbread night and the Recipe Books – they have raised a total of \$6688 to date. They will be selling the remainder of books and soups (recipes from the books) at **Everything Aussie** – so if you see them there – enjoy the soup! **A wonderful effort!!!!!!!!!!!!**