



## First Reading

1 Tm 6:13-16

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to Timothy

*Do all that you have been told until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Before God the source of all life and before Jesus Christ, who spoke up as a witness for the truth in front of Pontius Pilate, I put you the duty of doing all that you have been told, with no faults or failures, until the Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who at the due time will be revealed  
by God, the blessed and only Ruler of all,  
the King of kings and the Lord of lords,  
who alone is immortal,  
whose home is in inaccessible light,  
whom no man has seen and no man is able to see:  
to him be honour and everlasting power. Amen.

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 99. R. v.2

(R.) Come with joy into the presence of the Lord.

1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.  
Serve the Lord with gladness.  
Come before him, singing for joy. (R.)
2. Know that he, the Lord, is God.  
He made us, we belong to him,  
we are his people, the sheep of his flock. (R.)
3. Go within his gates, giving thanks.  
Enter his courts with songs of praise.  
Give thanks to him and bless his name. (R.)
4. Indeed, how good is the Lord,  
eternal his merciful love.  
He is faithful from age to age. (R.)

## Gospel

Lk 8:4-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

*As for the seed in good ground, this is the people who have heard the word and take it to themselves and yield a harvest through their perseverance.*

With a large crowd gathering and people from every town finding their way to him, Jesus used this parable:

'A sower went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some fell on the edge of the path and was trampled on; and the birds of the air ate it up. Some seed fell on rock, and when it came up it withered away, having no moisture. Some seed fell amongst thorns and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some seed fell into rich soil and grew with it and choked it. And some seed fell into rich soil and grew and produced its crop a hundredfold.

' Saying this he cried, 'Listen, anyone who has ears to hear!'

His disciples asked him what this parable might mean, and he said, 'The mysteries of the kingdom of God are revealed to you; for the rest there are only parables, so that they may see but not perceive, listen but not understand.

'This, then is what the parable means: the seed is the word of God. Those on the edge of the path are people who have heard it, and then the devil comes and carries away the word from their hearts in case they should believe and be saved. Those on the rock are people who, when they first hear it, welcome the word with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of trial they give up. As for the part that fell into thorns, this is people who have heard, but as they go on their way they are choked by the worries and riches and pleasures of life and do not reach maturity. As for the part in the rich soil, this is people with a noble and generous heart who have heard the word and take it to themselves and yield a harvest through their perseverance.'

## Reflection - Fr John Lovell

In today's Gospel we have that great parable on catechesis, or evangelisation. At face value the scattering of God's Word among humanity, like seed across the earth, might seem like something of a lottery, with it being a matter of mere chance whether it hits the mark by falling on good soil, or landing among rocks and thorns. Like many of Christ's parables it's a puzzle for us, and I think that's what it's meant to be. For a healthy faith is one that constantly questions and seeks to solve the riddles of life. It can't be something blind or passive or stagnant. And it can't just let the Word of God, which is our daily bread, fall by the wayside and go to waste, but must nurture it in the rich soil of reflection where it can take root, bear fruit and be an ongoing source of hope and nourishment for us and those around us.

An active, ongoing search for Truth and meaning in life is the hallmark of a healthy faith. We need to constantly wrestle with the questions of life like the patriarch Jacob, in the Old Testament, who wrestled with the angel of the Lord because he wanted to get to know God, and so was blessed by God and given the name Israel, meaning 'strong against God'.

Our key to understanding and solving the challenges of our daily existence relies on having a prayer life that includes this interior struggle to unlock the various metaphors, allegories, parables and other word puzzles the Lord has set for us in the scriptures. The world is our classroom and the Lord uses His Word in the context of our daily lives to teach us about the mysteries of the kingdom.

Before Vatican II in the early 60s, this kind of reflective thinking by lay members of the faithful would have been frowned upon by many in the clergy. Theology was only for theologians and contemplative prayer for monks and mystics. It was that great advocate of reform at Vatican II, the theologian Karl Rahner, who said, 'The Christian of the future will be a mystic or will not exist at all'. In saying this, he was merely recognising what Jesus had been telling us all the while in the scriptures, that since God has given each of us a soul to question and a brain to think with, we need to use them.

This is a gift of grace for which we must be grateful and never take for granted. Like the disciples to whom Jesus disclosed the secrets of the kingdom, we too must do all we can to help others who can't see beneath the surface of things, or believe life has no ultimate purpose and so have hardened their hearts to the Truth. We may not be able to convince them by our words, but since God is love, let us offer for them our prayers and allow the Lord to teach them by the example of our lives.