

**CALL TO PRAYER**

*Begin by calling upon God:* In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Let us pause for a moment, and listen attentively to this week's passage.

**THE WORD OF GOD**

**Matthew 13:1-23**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore. And he spoke to them at length in **parables**, saying: "A **sower** went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots. Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, **a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold**. Whoever has ears ought to hear."

The disciples approached him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand. Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: *You shall indeed hear but not understand, you shall indeed look but never see. Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and be converted, and I heal them.*"

"But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

"Hear then the parable of the sower. The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no **root** and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."

The Gospel of the Lord

**FAITH SHARING**

**Questions of the Week**

*Choose one*

1. Who helps you to grow deeper in your faith?
2. When the sower, in this week's Gospel, sowed his seed, not all of it fell on "good soil." What can you do in the coming week to make sure that you are open to God in your life? What is getting in the way of your being "good soil?"
3. Using the parable of Jesus in this reading, describe how faith has been planted in your life? How long did it take for that seed to land "on good soil?"

**CLOSING PRAYER**

God, your light of truth guides us to the way of Christ. May all who follow him reject what is contrary to the Gospel. We ask this, as we ask all things, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

**GOSPEL WORD SEARCH**

S K R N G M Y R Z S  
 W H E Q G W H M I W  
 O A O W W T U S B Y  
 L P A R A B L E S M  
 S E N P E K S A A N  
 D X P S U N P T J I  
 W S U S R V T A M V  
 O N C O O H T O J D  
 R U H O E G I B L I  
 C T X W R X S O I L  
 J E S U S C F G C F  
 S D D F L Y H B K W  
 O E R E T Q I E R I  
 W A G R E R S Z D T  
 E S I U D P E R J H  
 R H T S Y K C O R E  
 T C A O W W Q M O R  
 R T Y Z O H Q L G E  
 G M X A X R D O V D  
 M D E R D N U H P Q

BIRDS	MATTHEW	SHORE
BOAT	PARABLES	SOIL
CROWDS	PATH	SOWER
DEEP	ROCKY	SUN
GOSPEL	ROOTS	THIRTYFOLD
HUNDRED	SCORCHED	THORNS
JESUS	SEA	WITHERED

**GOSPEL GLOSSARY**

**Parables** are brief stories or wise sayings that Jesus used to teach a certain message.

A **sower** is a farmer who is planting seeds by hand. In this parable, the seeds represent the word of God. Sometimes it bears fruit and sometimes it does not. We must try to be fertile ground for the word of God.

A **hundred or sixty or thirtyfold** refers to the way that one seed can produce as many as thirty, or sixty, or even a hundred pieces of fruit or grain or vegetables.

A plant needs a good **root** system, deep and strong in order to survive times of ecological stress. We also need a solid and secure faith, rooted deep in the Spirit of God dwelling in our hearts.