

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY – ORD. (A)

DOES THE WORD OF GOD HAVE A PLACE IN MY HEART?

July 15/16, 2023

The word of God is known to be very important since creation. The world was created by the word. The word became flesh and dwelt among us. The word is planted firmly in heaven; (Ps.119:89). The word is a lamp and a light; (Ps.119:105). Jesus said: “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Today we hear that the word is like the rain that gives life and also, the seed which is sown in the hearts of all peoples.

Like rain, the word of God can reach everywhere and falls on all kinds of soil. The purpose for which God sends down His word is to bring life. Water gives life and helps crops to grow to bear fruit and to give nourishment to human beings and animals alike. Food and water are among the basic necessities of life, so also the word is a basic necessity of our spiritual life.

Why is the gospel of the Lord so slow to enter our hearts? Does it have a place in my heart? The answer depends on the type of heart I have and how I dispose myself to receive the word. I have to ask myself what type of soil I have. Is it like the path, the rock, the thorns, or the good soil?

In order for the gospel to stay within me, I should try to understand it. This means I need the assistance of the Holy Spirit to give me the gifts of knowledge and understanding. I have to know whether my heart is like a path that the devil is always walking on it. When I hear the Good News read to me, how long does it stay with me? Am I able to keep it and meditate on it for an hour, half of the day or the whole day? Do I leave the word spoken to me in Church as some of us leave the bulletins and other things behind after Mass? How does God’s word strengthen my faith in order to face troubles and persecutions? According to St. Paul, the word is useful for training in holiness and help equip the man of God for every good work; (2Tim.2:16).

It seems that today what is making the seed not bear fruit is the care of the world and the delight in riches. Even though we need to have certain things to survive, they have choked the word of God. I think more about earthly things than what the Scriptures are asking me to do.

God wants me to bear fruit in all aspects of my life that is why He has not stopped sending His messages to me. Do I also want to bear fruit? I have to

prepare my heart and clear from it all worldly ideas, the inordinate desires for riches and wealth. If I want the word to stay with me, then I have to apply it to what I do and say in every moment of my daily life. It should be a guiding principle in my thoughts, my words and my actions.

Jesus makes it clear that the good soil may not all produce the same amount. Some will be more than the others; thirty, sixty, and hundred. This means that God has given each the means to produce fruits according to his ability. In this case, I should not be jealous of you when you are at a higher position or achieving more than I do.

St. Paul was aware that keeping the word of God and living accordingly is not an easy task. That is what he told the believers in Rome, that the sufferings they were going through were nothing compared to the glory to be revealed. He told them that both creation and those who have received the Spirit were all facing problems. It is like a sick person groaning due to pains he is experiencing. But there is the assurance that all the pain and difficulties will end, and the joy will be without end. This should motivate you and me to accept God's word and all that it brings.

If I want an easy life, then keeping the word in my heart will be a difficult task and I will not find it pleasant but distasteful. But the Scriptures can shape my life and bring me freedom and peace. Do I want to get what I need and glorify God by my life? Then I have to bear fruit, This, then is the message from the Lord Jesus: "If you live in me, and my words stay part of you, you will ask what you will, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified in your bearing much fruit and becoming my disciples" (Jn.15:7-8). If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts, (Ps.95:8).