

12. July 2020

“The word of the Lord”

*Mt 13,1-23*

*That same day, Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the shore, and he told them many things in parables. He said, 'Listen, a sower went 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 at once, 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. Anyone who has ears should listen!' Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?' In answer, he said, 'Because to you is granted to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not granted. Anyone who has will be given more and will have more than enough; but anyone who has not will be deprived even of what he has. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So in their case what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah is being fulfilled: Listen and listen, but never understand! Look and look, but never perceive! This people's heart has grown coarse, their ears dulled, they have shut their eyes tight to avoid using their eyes to see, their ears to hear, their heart to understand, changing their ways and being healed by me. 'But blessed are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! In truth I tell you, many prophets and upright people longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it. 'So pay attention to the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the Evil One comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the seed sown on the edge of the path. The seed sown on patches of rock is someone who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But such a person has no root deep down and does not last; should some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, at once he falls away. The seed sown in thorns is someone who hears the word, but the worry of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so it produces nothing. And the seed sown in rich soil is someone who hears the word and understands it; this is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'*

Listening to the Word and understanding it determines whether our life is formed by the Word of God, or whether it does not live from this source of grace. Therefore, the study of the Word of God should be our daily bread.

The Word of God nourishes our spiritual life and gives us light and orientation.

However, Jesus makes us aware that we can easily be deprived of the fruit of this daily food, because the enemy tries to prevent us from doing so! How can this happen in relation to the spiritual life?

We must be very careful that we base our spiritual life on a lasting order. It is essential that we read the Holy Scriptures every day or, if we are unable to do so due to certain circumstances, that we do so the next day. The enemy can make us believe that the daily reading is not so important, that it can be postponed, that it is more important to spend time actively, that he can always use external circumstances to keep us away from the reading!

A consistent way of life, aware of the value of spiritual reading, can limit the influence of the enemy and instead anchor us permanently in the Word of God!

The enemy will also try to make us feel reluctant to the Word of God: we have often heard it and know it already, it is nothing new, etc., we cannot realize it after all, or simply an inner feeling of rejection.

Here too, it is important not to let oneself be led by feelings, but to hold on to the daily reading of the Holy Scriptures

It is not unusual for us to be tired and distracted just when we want to listen to the Word of God or read it. This has to do with the fact that it is a spiritual food that does not particularly stimulate our senses. One only needs to imagine how we would be responsive in the sensual realm, and the tiredness could easily fall away!

As Jesus explains to us, there are even more components which hinder or at least reduce the right reception and fruit of the Word of God!

First of all there are the tribulations that can arise for the sake of the Word of God. Let us take, for example, a clear statement formed by the Word of God on the currently very present ecclesial problem of the right treatment of homosexuals. Let us follow, for example, Cardinal Sarah, who laments that it is becoming increasingly common in the Church at present to no longer want to declare the

homosexual act as such to be sinful. We only talk about treating homosexuals with respect and consideration. However, the whole truth must be told. Perhaps among those who only want to promote understanding of homosexuals, there are already people who have suffered or fear persecution for the sake of the Word of God!

Another critical point why the Word cannot bear fruit is when we are too involved in this world and too absorbed by the worries of daily life or even by the dimension of the importance of material goods.

The Word of the Lord needs our attention and receptiveness, the constancy of reading, the courage to meet the Word as well and to make it an inner treasure within us!