



FOUR PATHS. ONE JOURNEY.

Weekly Gospel Reflection

Following the Three-Year Sunday Gospel Reading Cycle, the reflections are broadcast live each Wednesday as well as being recorded so you may view at your convenience.



 Weekly Gospel Reflection
QUADRATOS COMMUNITIES

Year of Mark

4th Sunday of the Pentecost Season

[Text btw Last Week and This Week - Mark 4.1-25]

And again, Jesus begins to teach beside the Sea.

Such a very large crowd gathers around that Jesus gets into a boat on the Sea and sits there, while the whole crowd is beside the Sea on the land.

Jesus begins to teach them many things in parables, and in his/her teaching Jesus says to them:

“Listen! A sower goes out to sow. And as the sower sows, some seed falls on the path, and the birds come and eat it up.

Other seed falls on rocky ground, where the seed does not have much soil, and it springs up quickly, since it has no depth of soil. Yet when the sun rises, it is scorched; and since it has no root, it withers away.

Other seed falls among thorns, and the thorns grow up and choke it, and it yields no grain.

Other seed falls into fertile soil and the seed brings forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

“Let anyone with ears to hear - listen!”

When Jesus is alone, those around him/her along with the twelve ask Jesus about the parables.

And Jesus says to them,

“You are being given the deeper truths of the Reign of God, but for those outside, everything is in parables - so that,

‘They may indeed look, but not perceive.
They may indeed listen, but not understand,
So that they may not turn again - and be forgiven.’ ”

And Jesus says to them,

“Do you not understand *this* parable? Then how will you understand any of the parables?

The sower sows wisdom and compassion.

- There are the ones on the path who have thoughts of wisdom and compassion fall on them.

When these people hear of such holiness, Satan immediately comes and takes away these thoughts.

- There are the ones where the seeds are sown on rocky ground.

When they hear thoughts of wisdom and compassion, they immediately receive them with joy. But they have no root, and endure only for a while. Then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of wisdom and compassion, they immediately fall away.

- And there are others where the seeds are sown among the thorns.

These are the ones who hear the thoughts of wisdom and compassion, but the cares of life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke these thoughts. And they yield nothing.

- And there are the ones where the seeds are sown on fertile soil.

They hear the thoughts of wisdom and compassion, and accept them, practice them and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Jesus says to them,

“Is a lamp brought in to be put under the bushel basket, or under the bed, and not on the lampstand?

For there is nothing hidden, except to be disclosed; nor is anything secret, except to be known. Let anyone with ears to hear - listen!”

And Jesus says to them,

“Pay attention to what you hear. The measure you give will be the measure you receive, and still more will be given you.

For to those who have given more, more will be given. And from those who have given nothing, even what they have will be taken away.”

This Week's Passage: Mark 4:26-34

Jesus also says,

“The Reign of Spirit is like someone who scatters seed on the ground and then sleeps night after night, and rises day after day. All the while the seed sprouts and grows. The one who scattered the seed does not know how it grows. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in its head.

And when the grain is ripe, the one who scattered the seed goes out at once, with his/her sickle, for the harvest has come.”

Jesus also says,

“With what can we compare the Reign of God, or what parable may we use for it?

The Reign of God is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

With many such parables Jesus speaks to everyone, as each is able to hear them. And Jesus only speaks to everyone in parables.

But to the disciples, Jesus explains everything in private.

Reflection

At long, last – with this week’s passage - we begin to read consecutively through Mark’s gospel starting mid-way in Chapter 4.

However, in late July and into August, we briefly return to John. More on the reason why as time draws near. A significant clue: yes it is connected to the arrival of Celtic Autumn in the Northern Hemisphere.

This week I have provided you with my translation of Mark 4: 1-34. This section has a number of strong images. Consider this list and add to it. Which 2 or 3 images most strike or resonate with you?

Sea	Scatter
Crowds	Night and Day
Disciples	Sleep and Rise
Parables / Parabola	Reign
Seeds	Mustard
Sow	Shrub
Path	Bird Nest
Rocky	Shade
Thorns	Stalk
Fertile	Ripe
Branches	Sickle
Sprout	Harvest

After noting the images that most catch your attention in some way, reflect on them in your journal. Place them in a few sentences and pray with them. And/or draw them or look through magazines, papers etc. search for a picture of the images, cut/tear them out and create a collage.

Before you attempt to discern meaning in your collage – simply sit with the image and pray with it. Allow meaning to come to you slowly over the week.

The Sea

One of the more significant additions that Quadratos makes to our understanding of the gospel is that each gospel author wrote on a particular landscape, with particular cultural meaning for the Hebrews and early Christians.

Mark's landscape is two-fold. Both are places that hold a Jewish memory of death.

1) Desert southeast of Jerusalem – where an entire generation wandered and died for 40 years.

2) Sea of Galilee – a cemetery where hundreds of fishermen drowned as their boats were capsized in the storms that suddenly erupt on this Sea.

Remember that this Gospel was originally composed for Jewish Christians in Rome who were being summarily executed by the Emperor, accused of setting Rome's Great Fire in 64 CE.

Now re-read this passage, recognizing that Jesus is teaching us as we stand near an inner death-like experience in our lives.

In the passage, the crowd stands on land at the edge of the Sea. But Jesus sits in a boat on the Sea. This small detail is neither biography nor travelogue.

In our times of turmoil, great fear and anxiety (Second Path) are we willing to get into the boat with Jesus? Are we willing to be a disciple of a higher power – and with that higher power experience the Sea of our troubles.

Or do we cling to the land – asking to be entertained by stories, rather than allowing them to touch us?

And do we fall into the ego delusion that the Reign of Spirit depends on our toil – rather than our openness to a greater reality?

