

Preparing the heart for God's harvest:

The readings of this weekend point to one thing: the Word of God. God's Word is powerful. It is meant to bring life, to heal, and to bear fruit. As it reveals that the Word alone is not enough. It needs open hearts to receive it and grow.

Jesus makes this clear in the Gospel through the Parable of the Sower. A sower goes out and scatters seed. The seed is always the same: the Word of God — God's teaching, His revelation, His message of love to us. But the seed falls on four different kinds of soil. And the soil determines what happens to the seed.

St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "The seed is the same, but the ground is different." God gives His Word equally to all of us. The difference is not in God, but in the welcome we give Him.

The soil, Jesus tells us, is various dispositions of our hearts. In this parable we see four kinds of hearts.

The path: Some seed falls on the path and is snatched away. These are people who hear the Word, but don't let it sink in. Distractions, busyness, noise. Before it can take root, the worries of life carry it away.

The rocky ground: Some seed falls on rocky ground. It springs up quickly with joy. But there's no depth. When hardship or difficulty comes, the faith withers. There are no roots to hold it.

The thorns: Other seed falls among thorns. It grows for a while, but then gets choked. The thorns are worries, the desire for riches, and the pull of other things. The Word is there, but it can't produce fruit because other things are taking all the energy.

The good soil: But some seed falls on good soil. This is the heart that listens, understands, and obeys. It holds onto the Word even in difficulty. And because it's open, it produces fruit — thirty, sixty, a hundredfold.

St. Jerome, who gave his life to translating Scripture, said: "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." When we open our hearts to the Word, we are opening our hearts to Christ Himself.

And St. Augustine adds: "The Word of God is a light to the blind, a tongue to the dumb, and a cure for the sick." But that light only shines where the soil is open.

Dear friends, the question for us today is not "Did I hear the Word?" We all heard it. The question is: "What kind of soil is my heart?" We all know the struggle. Distractions pull us away. Worries weigh us down. Hardships make us doubt. If we're honest, sometimes we are path, sometimes rock, sometimes thorns.

But the good news is this: soil can be prepared. We prepare our hearts by prayer, by the Sacraments, by moments of silence, by choosing to put God's Word first above the noise. A heart that is ready and open doesn't just hear. It translates hearing into action. And that is what

produces good fruit — fruit of love, patience, forgiveness, and service in our families and in our parish.

God keeps sowing. He never gets tired of scattering His Word on us. So, today the invitation is simple: Lord, make my heart good soil. Plant your word deeply within me, so that my life may bear fruit- thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold- for Your glory and for the building up of Your kingdom. Amen.