

**15<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time – 16-7-17**  
**Isaiah 55:10-11, Romans 8:18-23, Matthew 13:1-23**

Our Gospel speaks of the *sower sowing the seed* – sometimes it falls on hard ground and dies, gets choked in the thorns, or eaten by the birds.

Sometimes that hard ground is us: you and me. Living in such a way that we are unable to cope with difficulty and so it is shrugged off as too hard; besides, life is too busy for me to change now. What starts off as a new lease of life becomes choked in selfishness and the people around us suffer. The relationships in life become an added extra and our relationship with God becomes only when we want or need God. The path to life hits hard ground and questions who we are which is too dangerous so we take the easy path and turn away.

Are our hearts thorny with resentment, are our hearts hard and stony, does God's Word fall in scorched soil and have no roots? Imagine what it might be like when God's Word falls in the rich soil of new and open hearts.

The challenge for us is to rethink what is happening in our lives: are we receptive to a relationship with God in our lives so that the seeds of faith can take hold in new ways and grow to new depths or are we happy to simply sit and take in the same. Do we even listen as we sit here; can we even remember what the first reading was, 3 minutes ago.

Stoically we resist attempts to change and any attempts to be challenged to listen and to live differently don't eventuate. We shrug them off and say: it is them that need to change; the other person is at fault; always the other; not me, I don't need to change; I'm happy and justified in doing it my way.

**Our world will not change unless we do.**

**Regarding our faith and living it out, not alone but with each other: How does it change me as a person; not how does it make me feel better, but how does it change me as a person? If and when we do change our world changes with us.**

**Suddenly this little world in Rockhampton becomes different** – instead of putting up boundaries and walls to keep people out, we invite people into our lives. Our solutions to problems

- **become about dialogue and listening, not arguments**
- **become respect and dignity, not fear**
- **become new relationships & understanding about people & cultures, not imprisonment or racism.**

Slowly but surely it is I that am changed, these are the seeds of hope – where new growth and life come forth not in someone else but in me and how I live my life.

Slowly but surely our own relationships with God, each other and with our world deepen and penetrate our very being – we don't do it the same way anymore and are challenged to not simply feel good about giving to each other and our world – but change how we live and see each other. We are challenged to be uncomfortable, where our faith is not simply a treasure to hold onto but is lived out in the relationships which call each of us to new growth and not be choked by the thorns of misunderstanding and difference.

We end war not with bombs and more war, because we choke and wither; seeds of life scorched and on rocky ground with fear and suffering. Change comes from within our own hearts where our Gospel speaks of the *sower sowing the seed*:

*“Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a 100 fold, some 60, some 30. Let anyone with ears listen.”*

Let the change in the world be me, and let me then be the change we want to see in our world. Amen.

*Fr Matthew*