

A short reflection on today's Gospel Matthew 13: 1-23

Today's Gospel poses a deep-reaching and challenging question to those who have the courage to explore it with a truthful heart. The sower in the parable is Jesus; the seed is the word of God; the soil is the human heart. The seed which falls on the path is the word of God reaching hearts which are dull and uncomprehending. The seed falling on rocky ground is the word which initially may be received with joy, but the heart it reaches has no staying power. The seed which falls on thorny ground is the word of God choked by a heart which has succumbed to the lures and false promises of the material world. The seed which falls on rich soil is the word received by a heart which is open, loving and faithful, a heart in which the word flourishes and thrives. The word may be watered by tears, but the heart that receives it never fails. It never falters. It remains open to each day's glorious revelations about love and forgiveness, about compassion and suffering. It is a heart staunch and faithful which walks hand in hand with Jesus, right to the end of the road, living out his ministry of love each day under his beautiful, loving gaze.

The question posed by today's powerful and challenging Gospel is this: what kind of soil is each one of us who has been privileged to hear the word of God? What is the nature of our hearts? Are we deaf and uncomprehending? Are we initially attracted to the word of God but too shallow to allow it to take root in our lives? Are we so drawn to worldly power, to control and possessions, that adherence to the humility, gentleness, forgiveness and generosity of Jesus' ministry of love proves too daunting for our greedy hearts?

It is a question which, if we answer it in all honesty and respond positively to the truth it reveals, can effect a change in our lives rich in glorious possibilities. We can move from that state of enervation and torpor which characterises lives lived with either a lukewarm faith or faithlessness itself, and experience instead the gentle strength of Jesus' hand holding ours, the steadiness of his step as he walks beside us. We can experience indescribable happiness as we look into his beautiful face and his loving gaze holds ours. We can hear, as we come to the end of our journey, our Father's voice gently welcome us into eternal bliss: "Enter, good and faithful servant, and take the seat I have reserved for you."

The St Dymphna Mass will be celebrated at 7.30pm on Tuesday 18th July. This Mass is to give thanks to God for positive mental health and to pray for those who are struggling with mental health issues and those who care for them.

Songs from the Musicals Afternoon Tea with Anne Marie Hickey and Mary Murphy on Saturday 22nd July at 1.30pm in the Cathedral Hall. £25 per person. Pre booking required. Tel 71262894 or email cathedral@derrydiocese.org

During this Year of Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood we pray particularly for those currently discerning a call to serve the Lord as priests of the diocese of Derry. May their hearts be rich soil as they hear God's word and produce the choicest fruits in their service of the Church and God's people.

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

*Sean Kyle
Marie Hamilton
Ehrhart Kaiser
Brian Donaghey*

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

*William Boyce
Anne Hickey
Brian O'Reilly
Martha (Cissie) McLaughlin
Constantine McCaul*

May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as members of God's family:

*Elsie Eileen Haslett
FíonnThomas Loughrey
Joe Michael Cunningham
Zachary Stephen Martin*

To book a Baptism contact the Parish Office 02871 262894

Please remember: Godparents (1 male and 1 female over the age of 16)

Sacrament of Marriage

We congratulate the couple who celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage recently in the Cathedral

Caoimhe Mellon and Kevin O'Kane

Collection

Last week's collection: £4,572
Parish Development: £932

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

Carlo Acutis Statue: £100

Mary's Meals: £100

Hungry Children: £5

Trócaire: £50

Concern: £40

Sight Savers: £50

Smile Train: £50, £20

Cathedral Funds: £600, £20, £20, £20, £5

Flowers: £10, £10

SVdP: £10

Readers for 22nd/23rd July 2023

06.15 pm	Karen Harkin
07.30 pm	Angela McCallion
09.30 am	Kate Doherty
11.00 am	Claire O'Kane
12.30 pm	Roisin McGarrigle
07.00 pm	Anna Begley

Sick Visitation

Fr Roni Zacharias will attend the sick and housebound in his care during the coming week:

Monday: Fairman Place, Academy Terrace, Tutor Court, Tutor Close, Northland Parade, Northland Drive, Edenmore Street, Glenbank Road, Glenbank Gardens, Creggan Road, Helen Street, Oakfield Crescent

Friday: Glenowen Park, Cashelmore Park, Hatmore Park, Ardglan, Rosemount Gardens, Rosemount Avenue, Osborne Street, Montrose Gardens

Praying for the Holy Souls - Our Lady of Montligeon prayer group will commence in Termonbacca Retreat Centre, Derry on Monday 17th July 2023 at 7.30pm sharp. Continuing each Monday at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

St Columba's, Long Tower, and Áras Cholmcille have recently partnered to create a new religious and cultural tourism experience. If you are hosting family and friends from abroad, maybe you'd consider paying us a visit? Now open six days a week, we invite you to reflect on Colmcille's remarkable legacy and get an insight into monastic life through interactive displays, exquisite artefacts and stories that stir the soul. Entrance fee is £4.00 pp and the 'bringer' is free! We are also seeking volunteers to staff the reception for 3 hours once a week. This might be of interest to students seeking volunteering experience or anyone who enjoys engaging with tourists. Please contact Darinagh Boyle via email on darinaghboyle15@gmail.com or send a text to 07789850793 for further information.

Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine for Grandparents will take place on *World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly*, Sunday 23rd July. Rosary, 2.00pm, Anointing of the Sick, 2.30pm, Mass, 3.00pm, followed by Benediction and Rosary Procession. Dana will sing the pilgrimage favourite, *Lady of Knock*, as well as her new hymn, *Light the Flame*. Children's Prayer Appeal: Inviting all children to write a prayer for their grandparents and send it to Knock Shrine Museum. If you are unable to join the pilgrimage in person you can participate online at www.knockshrine.ie/watch

Mary's Meals Annual 'Step by Step to Feed the Next Child' Sponsored Walk is taking place throughout Ireland in August. This year Mary's Meals is organising a 'Two Bridges walk' in Derry on Sunday 6th August at 12 noon (Beginning in Sainsbury's car park, across the Foyle Bridge, along the Waterside and back over the Peace Bridge, finishing in the Sainsbury's car park). The distance is approximately 6 miles, or 9.5 km. Walkers will meet in Sainsbury's Car Park at 11.45 in preparation for 12 noon start. To register for this walk see www.bit.ly/stepbystepwalk. If you need any further information, contact Helen Quinn on 07814441701. You can find out more about Mary's Meals at <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/>

Urgently required: volunteers for St Vincent de Paul shop William Street, Derry. We will do our best to facilitate you with a job you might like, at a day and time that suits you. If you can help, call 028 7126 8325. Everybody welcome, we can't do what we do without your help and support.

St Eugene's Cathedral is monitored by CCTV cameras and by two live streaming cameras. Live streaming can be viewed online at www.churchservices.tv, www.watchmcnmedia or the parish website. The Diocese of Derry Privacy Notice is displayed on the parish website and Cathedral notice board, or you may obtain a copy from the Parish Office.

Safeguarding Notice: If you have any concerns with regard to the Safeguarding of children or adults in need of protection within the Church please contact Marie Gormley, the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) at 07596500793 or at mariegormley@derrydiocese.org or contact the Safeguarding Office, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ or PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland) 101 or Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust, 71314090 and ask for the Duty Social Worker.

Vol 50 No 28
Fifteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
16th July 2023

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Roni Zacharias