



# CONSOLATA SHRINE

## Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

16th JULY 2017 - YEAR A



### FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:10-11

*"The rain makes the earth fruitful."*

**A reading from the Book of Isaiah**

Thus says the Lord: "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I intend, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

*The word of the Lord*

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalms 65:10-14

**Response. The seed that fell into good soil yielded a hundredfold.**

You visit the earth, give it water;  
you fill it with riches.  
God's ever-flowing river brims over  
to prepare the grain. **(Response)**

And thus you provide for the earth;  
you drench its furrows;  
you level it, soften it with showers;  
you bless its growth. **(Response)**

You crown the year with your bounty  
Abundance flows in your pathways;  
in pastures of the desert it flows. **(Response)**

The hills are girded with joy.  
The meadows clothed with flocks.  
The valleys are decked with wheat.  
They shout for joy, yes they sing! **(Response)**



### SECOND READING

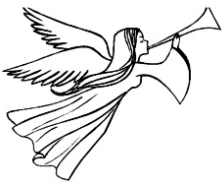
Romans 8:18-23

*"All creation is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God."*

**A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

Brethren: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning with labour pains together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoptions as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

*The word of the Lord*



## Alleluia

The seed is the word of God, and the sower is Christ; all who find him will abide forever.

## Alleluia



## GOSPEL

Matthew 13:1-23

### *“A sower went out to sow”*

#### A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew



**T**hat same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat there; and the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they had not much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched; and since they had no root they withered away. Other seeds fell upon thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He, who has ears, let him hear.” Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” And he answered

them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because, seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which says: ‘You shall indeed hear but never understand, and you shall indeed see but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are heavy of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn for me to heal them.’ But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. “Hear then the parable of the sower. When any one hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulations or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word, and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

*The Gospel of the Lord*

## REFLECTION

### The Word's Return

Today's readings, like last week's, ask us to meditate on Israel's response to God's Word—and our own. Why do some hear the word of the kingdom, yet fail to accept it as a call to conversion and faith in Jesus? That question underlies today's Gospel, especially. Again we see, as we did last week, that the kingdom's mysteries are unfolded to those who open their hearts, making of them a rich soil in the which the Word can grow and bear fruit. As we sing in today's Psalm, in Jesus, God's Word has visited our land, to water the stony earth of our hearts with the living waters of the Spirit. The first fruit of the Word is the Spirit of love and adoption poured into our hearts in baptism, making us children of God, as Paul reminds us in today's Epistle. In this, we are made a "new creation", the first fruits of a new heaven and a new earth. Since the first humans rejected God's Word, creation has been enslaved to futility. But God's Word does not go forth only to return to Him void, as we hear in today's First Reading. His Word awaits our response. We must show ourselves to be children of that Word. We must allow that Word to accomplish God's will in our lives. As Jesus warns today, we must take care lest the devil steal it away or lest it be choked by worldly concerns. In the Eucharist, the Word gives himself to us as bread to eat. He does so that we might be made fertile, yielding fruits of holiness. And we await the crowning of the year, the great harvest of the Lord's Day—when His Word will have achieved the end for which it was sent.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Today after 12 o'clock mass all parishioners who live in Kikuyu, Kinoo and Uthiru are request to meet at the tent behind the nursery School.
2. A Life in the Spirit Seminar organized by Charismatic group is ongoing. The seminar will be conducted every Sunday from 2pm to 5pm in the tent behind the nursery School. The Seminar is open for everyone. All are welcome.
3. We began a novena of 9 Saturdays to prepare for the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lady. The rosary with candles is being prayed every Saturday after the evening mass followed by a flowering to Our Lady and a Marian reflection.
4. The Construction of the Allamano Centre to build a new block of pastoral offices, hall and parking is on-going. We kindly request you to stop by the tables at the entrances of the church and get detailed information about the project. We also invite you to give your contribution or make a pledge towards the project.
5. Last week, 4 parishioners got 4 prizes. Two smartphones and two Generators. DONATE and WIN is still ongoing. The grand draw of the raffle will be on 31st July 2017. Two Brand New Renault Kwid are to be won. The more you participate the more chances of winning! Remember the code is \*369\*2# or M-pesa Pay Bill 804877 and Account WIN.
6. We remind you to return the blue forms to register according to your professions, so we can start the proper activities.
7. Those who registered for their Parishioner Cards are now available at the parish office. Kindly pick your card.
8. On Going Formation for Children who have received 1st Holy Communion but are not in lessons for Confirmation will meet next Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm.

## WEEKLY MEETING

- Executive Committee on Sunday 23rd at 10.30am



### **THIRD PRECEPT:**

“You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least in the Easter season.” Should we only receive the Eucharist once in the year? First, we remember that the Precepts of the Church tell us – rather clearly, not beating about the bush – what our minimum duty is to remain in communion with Christ’s Church. In fact, this Precept throws light on some important aspects of our faith. Although we are indeed encouraged to receive Holy Communion at each Mass (see CCC 1388) we are not obliged to do so. Perhaps we have broken the Eucharistic fast (at least one hour abstaining from food and drink, except water and medicine, before receiving Holy Communion); perhaps we came into Mass so late that it doesn’t seem right to receive the Sacrament (after the Gospel, or the Offertory at the latest); perhaps we are conscious of a serious sin we have not yet confessed. In these circumstances we can still participate prayerfully in the Mass to receive spiritual fruits. But again, why does the Precept require that we receive communion only once in the year? For many centuries up to the Middle Ages, Catholics didn’t receive Holy Communion as often as we do now – perhaps only three times a year, at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Why? In these times there was a great emphasis on the holiness of the Eucharistic Mystery, and people were afraid to approach the sacrament lightly. To ensure that people didn’t stop receiving communion altogether, the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), mindful of the teaching of Jesus that “unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53), affirmed that once a year, at Easter, was the absolute minimum for a Catholic to be united to the Lord in this sacrament. This was confirmed by the Council of Trent in 1551 and has remained in force ever since. It is at Easter that this obligation applies because the “paschal feasts [are] the origin and centre of the Christian liturgy” (CCC 2042). In other words, Jesus instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper as a memorial of his passion, and it is a pledge of our participation in his resurrection: Easter marks the time of the institution of the Mass, and the Mass directs us towards the eternal Easter of the Kingdom of Heaven. What does “the Easter season” mean in practice? It means any time from Palm Sunday up to Pentecost Sunday. (Obviously, put together with the second Precept, we realise that we should make our confession before our Easter communion). This precept is also called the “Easter Duty”. To summarise all the above: it is recommended to receive communion each time we are at Mass, yet bearing in mind the supreme dignity of the Eucharist, which we should never receive without good preparation including, at least from time to time, sacramental confession, the Church places the obligation on us of receiving Holy Communion once only in the year. A possible misunderstanding of this Precept might be that we only have to go to Mass once in the year! (The first Precept reminded us that we must be at Mass on Sundays and holydays, whether or not we receive communion). The rule of the Lateran Council that someone who fails to observe this third Precept should not be given a Christian funeral is of course no longer in force; yet it is a stark reminder of the seriousness with which the Church intends the Precept to be received. The Precepts of the Church can seem a little stern, until we realise that they are a safety net, designed to keep us from falling away from the loving heart of Jesus, beating in his Church.

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