Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time — July 16, 2023

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

The readings presented to us this weekend speak loudly and clearly of hope. From the prophet Isaiah we hear:

"My word...shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the things for which I sent it."

St. Paul confidently writes, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

In our day, however, these passages, together with the famous parable of the Sower, are proclaimed in a word that seems to be trapped in a cycle of hopelessness. This hopelessness, more virulent than the COVID or AIDS viruses, threaten to destroy our capacity to imagine and wonder, and we must continue to protect ourselves from its destructiveness by listening attentively to the word of God.

In line with the idea of "Global Spirituality", how many of us ever spend time imagining what it will be like when the world lives at peace. Civilization has dreamed its way into exploring the face of the earth and the mysteries of the universe. Might we not be dreaming ourselves into a nuclear holocaust? At the very least such speculations increase the threat of nuclear war.

"The problem is too immense!" "I can't do anything about it, so why should I bother?" "It's unrealistic to imagine that all people of the world could live in peace. It will never happen"

Such remarks, common responses these days, are symptoms of the syndrome of learned hopelessness, and a further manifestation of this disease is seen in those who live as though hopelessness is all there is. Too many of us have become such pragmatists that we have lost the capacity to delight in possibility.

What has happened to that wonderful capacity God gave human beings to revel in possibility?

The word of God is love, and the Christian's mission is to continue to spread the message that peaceful relationships at all levels of society are possible. But how can we live in peace if we have given it all up as hopeless before we've even begun?

Yes, we should mark well the parable of the Sower these days, and ask ourselves where we find ourselves in it.

Who will steal away from us that which has been sown in our minds? How deep are our roots? Are they sturdy enough to withstand drought and pestilence? Do we let worldly anxiety and the lure of money cut us off from living the gospel authentically?

Made in the image and likeness of God, we have been endowed with the capacity to create rather than simply to conform. The world will tell us again and again that creativity is not realistic and just won't work, for the world's stock in trade is conformity. It was true in the prophet Isaiah's day, and it is true in ours as well, but how we respond to such pressure will mark us as God's own.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**July 18**	**11:00AM**
Carlo & Michelle (anniversary)		Lacsina Family
Wed.	**July 19**	**11:00AM**
Living memorial		
Thur.	**July 20**	**11:00AM**
Michael Funchauser		Lily Militar
Fri.	**July 21**	**11:00AM**
Jorgelia Quiapo †		Lacsina Family
Sat.	**July 22**	**4:30PM**
Bill Valli †		John Collins
Sun.	**July 23**	**9:00AM**
Jorge, Tomasa, Jose & Manuel†		
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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