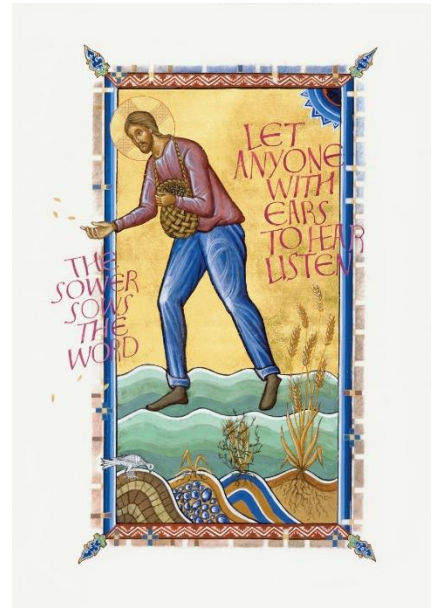


Grace Notes in Miniature

Friday January 29th, 2021

Dear friends,

It has been a very busy week and, although I am starting to write these musings on Friday evening, I probably won't be able to send them out until Saturday. My apologies! Today's Gospel reading from the Lectionary is the Parable of the Sower, one which we need to keep in our consciousness at all times. If you take the time to examine the illustration from the Saint John's Bible¹, you will see that there is much to contemplate in the way the artists have chosen to depict this story.² Worth noting is the gold seed which scatters outside the frame: this is a message to us that the Word of God is not confined to any space, time or context, and, if we are to take seriously our baptismal call to be evangelisers, we should be sharing and witnessing to the Gospel at all times. The reading from the Letter to the Hebrews and its responsorial psalm both are encouragement – especially the words of Psalm 37 which *admonish us to*: Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. *The psalmist further reminds us*: Our steps are made firm by the Lord, when he delights in our way; though we stumble, we shall not fall headlong, for the Lord holds us by the hand.



I happened upon an address given by Bishop Robert Barron to the United States Naval Academy,³ and think that his words can be appreciated by all of us. As he is speaking to Naval officer candidates, he speaks of the sea and explains the metaphors used in several biblical passages, especially the story of Jonah, who having been instructed by God to go by land to Ninevah to convert the people, instead climbs on a ship and heads for the ends of the known world to escape his call. I listened to this as I was doing some knitting and found that I was a bit disappointed when it ended. The link is below.

¹ Saint John's Bible, Parable of the Sower and the Seed. Artists: Aidan Hart with contributions from Donald Jackson and Sally Mae Joseph.

² <https://sites.up.edu/saintjohnsbible/parable-of-the-sower-and-the-seed-2016/>

³ <https://www.wordonfire.org/annapolis/>

Monday is the beginning of World Interfaith Harmony Week (the first week of February each year). Conceived to promote a world culture of peace and nonviolence, it was first proposed by King Abdullah II of Jordan at the United Nations in 2010 and quickly adopted by the UN General Assembly. Governments, institutions and civil society are called to observe it with various programs and initiatives that would promote the aim of the WIHW objectives. The Interfaith Council of Halton is sponsoring an on-line event on Thursday, February 4th, in which a young student will share her winning speech about “A World With No Boundaries” and we shall have the opportunity to share thoughts in breakout rooms. The poster was sent out to chaplains and PA’s, and you can access information at



<https://www.interfaithcouncilhalton.com/> **All are welcome!** In 2021 we also mark the UN’s inaugural International Day of Human Fraternity on 4 February. On 27 March 1953, the Canadian Government presented seven nickel-silver doors for the General Assembly building. On the exterior of each one of them are four panels in bas-relief symbolizing fraternity (inset), peace, justice, and truth.⁴ This may be a good time to become acquainted with Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter “Fratelli Tutti”. You can find the Letter, a summary and some video conversations about it on the web site of the Diocese of Saskatoon.⁵

This would also be a good time to remember the Prayer of St Francis. The McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame is offering a free series on Praying with the Saints; this week began a three week journey with St Francis. You can register for this (and also access the previous weeks on St Teresa of Avila at the link below. ⁶ Most of us probably can sing this prayer better than we can remember the spoken words, so I leave you with this recorded version so that you may sing along: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOvQLMfppN8>

With every blessing for a beautiful week of harmony,

Gillian

⁴ **PHOTO:** ©United Nations/DN

⁵ <https://rcdos.ca/ministries-services/moral-social-issues/the-office-of-justice-and-peace/fratelli-tutti/>

⁶ <https://think.nd.edu/praying-with-the-saints/>