

## **Be Rich Soil**

*A Missionary Commentary on the  
Sunday Readings*

## **Sunday Readings**

Isaiah 55:10-11

Psalm 65:10, 11, 12-13, 14

Romans 8:18-23

Matthew 13:1-23 or 13:1-9

[USCCB link to the Sunday Readings](#)

Jesus calls us to mission. We must be rich soil so others can hear and see the Kingdom of God.

Jesus teaches us how to follow him, learn from him, and live like him, so he can send us on mission. We become rich soil by using our ears – and all the powers God has given us – to hear, accept, and understand the Word of God. We become rich soil when we open our eyes to see the Kingdom of God.

Missionaries often experience a surprising reversal. They step outside of their comfort zone and cross some type of border (place, class, culture) to be like Jesus for others. In doing so, they discover distractions that separate them from the Word of God, how their faith lacks depth or is choked by their own fears or longing for creature comforts. They become wide eyed with awe when they see the values, passion, and faith in the people they thought they were going to serve or save. We bring our leftovers, and the people shower us with the best they have to offer.

This surprising reversal humbles the missionary. It purifies by breaking up hard hearts, removing obstacles, and deepening roots into the Word of God. This frees the missionary to move beyond personal fears, or longing for creature comforts, to see the stranger as a sister or brother. Then, together, collaborating to birth God's reign of love, salvation, and justice in this place at this time.

## **Notes on the Sunday Readings**

### **First Reading**

God, through the prophet Isaiah, clearly tells us that his Word will accomplish his purpose.

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### **Psalm**

Rain waters the land, “drenching its furrows, breaking up its clods, softening it with showers” that, year after year, gives abundance, “valleys blanketed with grain.”

### **Second Reading**

Paul teaches us that sin destroys our lives, the lives of others, and even the earth. Yet even creation “awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God.”

### **Gospel**

Jesus, speaking in a parable, describes how the word of God will take root in the “rich soil” of our hearts if we can manage our anxiety, the lure of riches, tribulations, and a hardness of heart. In Saint Matthew’s telling, Jesus instructs his disciples on why he uses parables to explain “what is hidden,” how they are blessed because they see and hear.” The seed is the “word of the kingdom” heard, understood, and acted upon by the disciple. Some disciples lack understanding and the evil one steals the word away. Others lack depth and a trial makes them “fall away.” The disciple anxious about worldly things, or the lure of riches, chokes and bears no fruit. Only rich soil absorbs the word of God, understands it, and acts on it will bear abundant fruit.

### **Connections**

**Go Forth...** is forming missionary disciples and sharing their work:

Our podcast guests for this week are Drew and Molly McAuliff, family missionaries who just returned from Finca, the Farm of the Child in Honduras. Subscribe now at Apple or Spotify!

You can get the most up-to-date information about Go Forth ... at our webpage – <https://uscatholicmission.org/go-forth>.

Join us for Mission Consult: Communication Tools and Best Practices on Thursday, July 20 at 2pm ET. Lisa Helene Bacalski, our communications specialist, will provide an overview of how tools and intentional strategies can provide focus and improve outreach efforts for mission. [Register now!](#)

Please pray for the missions.  
God bless you in all the ways you **Go Forth...**



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