

**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**20th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday of the Fathers
15 October 2023**

Sunday of the Fathers



Parable of the Sower

PERHAPS THE EASIEST GOSPEL PARABLE to understand is the parable of the sower, found in each of the synoptic Gospels. The fact that the Lord Jesus Himself explains the parable certainly explains why this is so; still, it is up to us, the Church, to apply this parable to later developments in the history of faith, including those of our own day.

What is “the Word about the Kingdom”?

As the Lord explained the parable, the seed is variously described as *“the word about the kingdom”* (Matthew 4:18), *“the word”* (Mark 13:14) and *“the word of God”* (Luke 8:11). At the beginning of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee, we are told that the message which He initially preached was *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”* (Matthew 4:17). He began forming His disciples by explaining what it would take to enter this kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5-7).

To speak of the kingdom of heaven was not unusual in a Jewish context; what was unexpected was that Jesus identified the coming of the kingdom with His own presence (see Luke 4:21). Because of His coming, He proclaimed, the age of God’s kingdom had drawn near.

After Christ’s death and resurrection, the Scriptures tell us, the Holy Spirit came upon the assembly of Christ’s disciples. Immediately, Peter began explaining to the bystanders what had happened. His address shows us how “the word about the kingdom” was explained in light of the paschal event: *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 2:38). To repentance is now joined baptism in Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit: the personal entry of believers into the mystery of Pascha and Pentecost.

The word about the kingdom was increasingly identified as “Jesus.” As Peter told the Roman centurion, Cornelius, *“To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins”* (Acts 10:43).

As the Gospel spread among the Gentiles, chiefly through the ministry of St Paul, we find “the word about the kingdom” expanded to include the mystery of the incarnation. Encouraging the Philippians to imitate Christ’s humility, St Paul writes: *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men”* (Philippians :2:5-7). The word about the kingdom now was expressed as “God became man.” Later Fathers, reflecting further on the Scriptures, would expand this word even further: “God became man that man might become God.”

As the early Church grew over the first few centuries, the rite of baptism came to include an explicit profession of faith. To the above-mentioned teachings were added a number of Scriptural doctrines, such as Christ’s Ascension and the resurrection of the dead. Some of these local creeds were employed in the composition of a Creed for all the Churches at the first two ecumenical councils. “The word about the kingdom” had developed into the Nicene Creed.

The Ground Which Receives the Seed

After the Lord Jesus described the seed, He turned His attention to the soil in which the seed was sown. In the development of faith God’s initiative must be accepted by the “soil,” the human heart in which the gift of faith is planted. The soil cannot be forced to bear fruit; neither can the human heart be obliged to accept the Gospel message. Both must cooperate if the heart is to bear the fruit of faith. Later generations would describe this cooperation with the Greek word *synergy*.

Some seed, the Lord says, falls by the roadside and is trampled underfoot by passersby. It never has the chance to take root because the ground is packed hard by the foot traffic on the road, As St Cyril of Alexandria observed, “All whose minds are hard and unyielding and, so to speak, pressed together, do not receive the divine seed.... They do not accept the words that would produce in them the fear of God” (Homily 41 on Luke).

There are people who come to church, perhaps for some special occasion such as a baptism or memorial, who are not intent on listening to the message of the prayers, the readings or the sermon. They are simply sounds which have no meaning to them. The seed has been sown, but it bounces off the hardness of their hearts which are closed to any sentiment of faith.

The Lord indicates that, when seed falls among the rocks, it springs up for a while and then dies because it is shallow, having no root. Commenting on this passage, St Cyril of Alexandria noted that “There are men whose faith has not been proved. They depend simply on words and do not apply their minds to examining the mystery. Their piety is sapless and without root. When they enter the churches they feel pleasure, often in seeing the multitude assembled. ... When they go out of the churches, at once they forget the sacred doctrines and go about in their customary course, not having stored up within themselves anything for their future benefit. If the affairs of Christians go on peacefully and no trial disturbs them, even then they scarcely maintain the faith and that, so to speak, in a confused and tottering state. When persecution troubles them and the enemies of the truth attack the churches of the Savior, their heart does not love the battle and their mind throws away the shield and flees” (Homily 41 on Luke).

In the parable the Lord teaches that some hearts are like fields full of brambles, thorns and weeds. Several Fathers have pointed out that these hearts have been beset by the passions (greed, gluttony, lust and the like). Even if the word of God touches them, the passions which they have entertained for some time are stronger and they choke any movement towards repentance which the believer might have entertained. Their attempts at repentance are weak and shallow. Their intentions are good but not strong enough to overpower the pull of the passions on their hearts.

Why Parables at All?

Christ makes a distinction between those whose curiosity might be roused by a parable and his committed followers who might be expected to understand His teachings. It takes a commitment of faith to make a hearer able to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. People who have already come to see Jesus as Lord and Messiah are already well disposed to incorporate His teachings in their lives. Hearers who have yet to do so are not ready to grasp the heart of His teachings.

In the age when the Church developed the catechumenate for instructing new believers, a similar process was employed. People's attention was captured during the time of "pre-catechesis." Once the hearer displayed a measure of faith, they were instructed in the history of God's saving works. Not until the new believer had professed the Church's faith and had been baptized, was the doctrine of the holy mysteries presented. We see traces of this process in our liturgical cycle surrounding Pascha. During the Great Fast our Scripture readings focus on the ethical teaching of the Wisdom books and on the basis of salvation history recorded in the Torah. Only after baptism at Pascha does the new Christian hear about the holy mysteries, the heart of Christian experience.

A poster for a "Fall Dance for Life" event. The background is a warm orange-brown color with decorative autumn leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and red in the corners. In the center, there is a dark brown, irregular shape resembling a leaf or a drop, containing the text "FALL DANCE FOR LIFE" in large, bold, yellow capital letters. Below this shape are three orange pumpkins. To the right of the central shape, the date and time are listed: "Saturday October 28" in large, bold, dark red letters, followed by "7 - 10 pm" in a smaller, bold, dark red font. Above the central shape, the text "Augusta Spirit and Truth Young Adult Ministry Presents" is written in a smaller, dark red font. Below the pumpkins, a line of text reads "Come support a pro-life cause! 18+ are welcome". At the bottom, there is a table with ticket information and a section for event details. The table has three rows and two columns. The first column is labeled "Tickets:" in a vertical orientation. The first row shows "\$10 BEFORE Oct 13th", the second row shows "\$15 AFTER Oct 13th", and the third row shows "\$20 at the door". To the right of the table, the text "Wear your best Halloween costume! Winner gets a prize!" is written. Below this, the location is given: "Location: St. Mary on the Hill Parish Hall". At the very bottom, the contact information is provided: "Call/Text to purchase tickets: 706.267.3352 Or email catholicaugustanewsletter@gmail.com." followed by "Tickets are limited." and a final line: "100% of proceeds go to benefit Pregnant Choices!".

Augusta Spirit and Truth Young Adult Ministry Presents

FALL DANCE FOR LIFE

Saturday October 28
7 - 10 pm

Come support a pro-life cause! 18+ are welcome

Tickets:	\$10 BEFORE Oct 13th	Wear your best Halloween costume! Winner gets a prize! Location: St. Mary on the Hill Parish Hall
	\$15 AFTER Oct 13th	
	\$20 at the door	

Call/Text to purchase tickets: 706.267.3352
Or email catholicaugustanewsletter@gmail.com.
Tickets are limited.
100% of proceeds go to benefit Pregnant Choices!



Calling ALL Fathers and Sons

*Trail Life USA is a church-based,
Christ-centered, boy-focused
mentoring and discipleship journey
that speaks to the heart of a boy.*

JOIN US

**Thursdays at 6:30pm
in St. Teresa of Avila's Ed Building
Rooms 3-4**



**GA2011Troopmaster@gmail.com
TrailLifeUSA.com**



Trail Life

**Our Motto is
Walk Worthy**



THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS JFK Assembly 180 will be having a complete online fundraiser through Double Good to benefit Guitars for Vets from Oct. 19 at 5 p.m. to Oct. 23 at 5 p.m. This is a 12-week program that teaches veterans who have issues with PTSD or other combat-related injuries, mental health issues, or sexual trauma to play guitar as a mode of healing. At the end of the program, the graduate receives a guitar of their own. The guitars are priced at around \$210 per guitar not to mention the material that comes along with it.



<https://popup.doublegood.com/s/lwta6670>

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS are doing their annual Catholic Citizens Essay Contest. The Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest is open to all Catholic students — in public, private or parochial schools — in grades 8-12 during the current school year. Contestants must write from 500 to 750 words on this topic: How can the Church evangelize in the digital age? The deadline for entry is the 29th of October. There are monetary awards. If interested, see Fr. Michael for an application.

Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
37	20 August 2023	146.22
39	27 August 2023	21.00
29	3 September 2023	511.50
40	10 September 2023	618.00
31	17 September 2023	75.00
31	24 September 2023	0.00
27	1 October 2023	60.00
39	8 October 2023	\$502.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions:

For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. John Azar, Fr. James Graham, Fr. Michael Copenhagen, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, Mandie, Nick Baiad, Charlie & Kathleen Barnette, Alfonso de la Vega, Michael A Skrocki, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8:00AM, The Third Hour

Friday – 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

JOIN US IN PRAYING the 3rd Hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8am. This is a short prayer service from our version of the Liturgy of the Hours. It lasts less than 20 minutes or so. Come join us!

PRAYER OPPORTUNITES AROUND TOWN –Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

Resurrectional Troparion

(Tone 3)



Let all in Hea - ven re - joice and all on earth



be glad, for the Lord has ex-er-ted po-wer with His



arm, by death He has tram-pled up-on Death, and



has be-come the first-born from the dead. He has de-



- li - ver'd us from the bo-som of Ha - des and has



gran-ted to the world great mer - cy.

Prokimenon

Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

All: Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Reader: For you are just in all you have done to us, and all your works are true and your ways right.

All: Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Reader: Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers,

All: and your name is worthy of praise and glorious forever.

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	Philippians 2:12-16	Luke 9:18-22
Tuesday:	Philippians 2:16-23	Luke 9:23-27
Wednesday:	Philippians 2:24-30	Luke 9:44-50
Thursday:	Philippians 3:1-8	Luke 9:49-55
Friday:	Philippians 3:8-19	Luke 10:1-15
Saturday:	2 nd Cor 1:8-11	Luke 7:1-10

Saints of the Week:

Oct. 15: Holy Martyr Lucian
Oct. 16: Holy Martyr Longinus the Centurion
Oct. 17: Holy Prophet Hosea; Holy Martyr Andrew of Crete
Oct. 18: Holy Apostle Luke the Evangelist
Oct. 19: Holy Prophet Joel; Holy Martyr Varus
Oct. 20: Holy Great-Martyr Artemius
Oct. 21: Commemoration of our Venerable Father Hilarion the Great
Oct. 22: Holy Abercius Bishop of Hieropolis; and the 7 martyred children of Ephesus

Word Search

G	W	O	S	E	V	F	N	U	K	M	H	K	K	P	H
E	Y	R	A	C	T	F	L	S	M	F	S	D	R	I	B
D	B	T	E	Z	Z	E	J	O	D	E	K	O	H	C	X
A	E	D	G	T	C	E	I	P	J	D	Q	M	R	V	D
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U	D	D	D	O	D	S	D	W	R	H	F	I	K	C	L
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F	F	R	Z	T	S	R	P	N	H	E	A	R	I	T	D

Ate
Birds
Choked
Ears
Fruit
Hear
Kingdom
Lord

Moisture
Parable
Patience
Rock
Seed
Sow
Sower
Thorns

Trodden
Underfoot
Wayside
Withered
Word
Yielded

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus
JFK Council

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm
Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly
2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm
St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group
Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:
Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession
Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation
Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning
Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael
at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing
Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 1-800-479-5910.