

# Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

## Suggestions for Leading Worship



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**RE:** Liturgical Suggestions for the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A

**Sunday date:** July 12-13, 2008

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Dear Fathers and Deacons,

### **An Overview...**

This week we begin hearing a series of parables in Matthew's Gospel concerning the kingdom of God. Today's parable of the seed on fertile ground is challenging to those of us who hear it, but comforting in the fact that we know that God's word will fall on fertile soil and blossom despite all the obstacles we may throw in His path. We are all familiar with the four types of soil on which the seed can fall: three thwart the seed's growth and the fourth brings forth bounty. The first part of the Gospel talks about the soil and the second about the seed. In both cases, whether we see ourselves as the soil or as the seed, we know that God is the sower, and He will prevail in building His Kingdom. It is our challenge to open our own hearts to God's word and then have the courage, strength and will to spread it, thus producing abundant fruit.

There is a choice of longer and shorter versions of this Gospel. The longer version is rich in lessons and opens the door to the next few Sundays when we continue to hear God revealing himself to us through parables.

The first reading from Isaiah also carries the message of the seed that falls to do God's will on earth.

### **Reflection Questions...**

1. How do you as a member of your parish community help to prepare the soil to hear and spread the word of God?
2. How do I sow the word of God, in my words and in my actions?
3. What stands in the way of my being open to God's word?

### **Other Considerations as You Prepare...**

1. Many of the texts of the Penitential Rite Form C are appropriate but you may want to consider something to expand on today's message with something like this "Lord Jesus, you are the word of faith that renews our hearts; Christ Jesus, you are the rain that refreshes our spirit; Lord Jesus, you are the seed of glory that sprouts to eternal life."
2. The Opening Prayer is appropriate in that it prays that we follow the word of the Gospel and reject what gets in our way.
3. Any of the Prefaces for Ordinary Time are appropriate today.

## Sample Intercessory Prayers for the 15th Ordinary Sunday

*Priest:* Let us pray that God's word may take root in our hearts and in the hearts of all people on our planet.

*Deacon* (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. For our Church, that we may be fertile ground on which the word of God's love may take root and flourish throughout the world . . . we pray to the Lord.
2. For world, state and city leaders and for those who aspire to office that they may sow seeds of justice and peace wherever they go . . . we pray to the Lord.
3. For all who ignore or reject God's word... that they may reject the lure of wealth and prestige and turn to God and His love and mercy... we pray to the Lord.
4. For this assembly of believers gathered here that we may always remain open to God's message and eagerly work to do His will...we pray to the Lord.
5. For beloved dead that they may experience the joy of heaven promised to those who build the kingdom . . . we pray to the Lord.
6. In silence we lift up the prayers in our hearts . . .

*Priest:* God of fertile land,  
hear and answer these petitions we place before you today.  
Plant your love and your word upon our hearts  
and make us true disciples of your will.  
We ask this and all things in the name of Jesus, our Lord  
and Savior.  
Amen.