

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

July 12, 2020

The Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 55:10–11 † Romans 8:18–23 † Matthew 13:1–23

Reflection by: Sister Ann Marie Rimmer, OP

Living in Strange Times

I think we can all agree, these are strange and difficult times. The COVID-19 pandemic seems to be making a second sweep across our country. Deaths from the virus are continuing, more people are testing positive, many of us are tired of all the restrictions; wearing masks, keeping social distancing, washing hands frequently. The economy is suffering, people are losing their jobs, companies are closing their doors. It is a pretty glum picture. In addition, the Black Lives Matter protests have illuminated the terrible injustices perpetrated upon our Black sisters and brothers. We have so much work to do. So we ask, “Where is God in all of this?”



This Sunday's readings offer us some hope. Isaiah tells us God's creative energy is like rain and snow that come to moisten the earth to enable seeds to flourish and grow. That creative energy will not return until it accomplishes its task, to establish peace and justice here on earth. Matthew's gospel, which consists of parables of the Kingdom, tells of the Sower (God) scattering seeds on the soil (us). It is true the seeds sometimes fall on inhospitable soil or rocks, yet some do fall on rich soil.

We can see it. Yes, these are difficult times. And yet we see so many examples of people and small groups doing wonderful and creative things to alleviate the suffering of their neighbors and friends. The extraordinary number of people all over the world who joined the protests were breathtaking. We still have much work to do, but the seeds are taking root.

Being a follower of Jesus is not simply a matter of hearing the Word but involves conscious choices of acting on the Word. It is being called to continuous transformation.

Paul reminds us that all creation is groaning in labor pains to be set free of corruption to enjoy the freedom of God. Little by little, step by step, tiny shoots of hope show themselves. Let us be part of that!