



*From the Pastor
3rd Sunday of Easter
April 15, 2018*

Last week I reflected on the first set of orations prayed at Masses offered **At Seedtime** in hope for a bountiful crop; today reflects on the second set. Each set stresses similar ideas: God is

the source of all good gifts; we must rely on God's help; God planned that creation would be brought to fruition by human cultivation, etc.

What is particular to these orations is its focus on the spiritual benefits of the physical foods we grow and eat, in and through the Sacraments. So, in a way, this set could be called a set of prayers 'For Catholic Planters.' Again, as I said last week, even if you do not have a **green thumb**, pray these orations in thanks for, and in the name of, all who 'toil' so we can eat!

Collect - At Seedtime - B

*Pour out your gracious blessing on your people,
Lord God, so that through your generosity
our land may yield its fruits
for us to enjoy with ever-grateful hearts,
to the honor of your holy name.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ ... and ever. Amen.*

"FROM GOD AND FOR GOD." Many bemoan how much God expects [or some even say, DEMANDS] from us, yet, as this oration states, God *gives to* us far more than He *asks of* us! Perhaps the source of our negativity and sense of being overwhelmed comes from not having the right attitude from the get-go. For God never requires from us what He does not enable us to attain or achieve. We 'go wrong' when we look only to ourselves for the reason and purpose of all things, or disregard the divine plan and do not take advantage of the help God offers us. As trite as it may sound, don't we all need to nurture a better **'Attitude of Gratitude?'**

Prayer over the Offerings - At Seedtime - B

*Look with favor on our offerings, O Lord,
so that we, who bring you
grains of wheat made into bread
to be changed into the Body of your Son,
may find joy in the blessing you bestow
on the seed to be sown in the earth.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

"AS THE GRAINS ONCE SCATTERED." We have few historical documents from the Church's early history; after the Bible, the oldest accounts we have of the holy Mass and Sacraments are from the writings of **Saint Justin Martyr**, who died in **AD 165!** However, we do have what is called **'The Didache'** [*'did - ah - kay*] also called **'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.'** Written around AD 65-80, it is a compilation of early Church teaching and practices. It includes a poetic line that goes like this: **"As the grains of wheat, once scattered on the hills, were gathered into one, so too, may your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom."** Some current Communion hymns even echo this ancient poem! How blessed are planters, sowers and bakers who have a firsthand experience of this analogy.

Prayer after Communion - At Seedtime - B

*Grant to your faithful, almighty God,
abundance of the earth's fruits, that,
nourished by these in the present age,
they may also grow in spiritual things and
so obtain the good things of eternity, of which
they have received a pledge in this Sacrament.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

GOD'S PLEDGE FULFILLED IN SACRAMENT.
A current contentious Church issue is balancing earthly and heavenly concerns. As the Apostle remind us: **"If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well," but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?"** [James 2:15-16]

But the Church's **main** goal is getting everyone to heaven by making our earthly journey as beneficial as possible. One NJ minister, in reference to illegal immigration, said that since the Risen Lord returned to earth, **this** world is the focal point - but that's not true. As **Saint James** said, we must provide for earthly needs AND for spiritual needs; in fact, our concern can never be, or even mainly be, only for the here-and-now; we must use everything for its heaven-bound purpose. Are we doing so?

With God's love and my prayers,

Father Mike

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