

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Jun 15th 2017

Before I got married I wondered why I didn't have a green thumb. I love the spring and have always planted flowers, spending lots of time planning my purchases and planting. Despite my enthusiasm, my garden never prospered. The reason for this is because I was only committing to the initial work of planting; maintaining the garden escaped me. Thank goodness I have a husband who is more committed to gardening than I am and understands not only when to plant but is skilled at weeding, watering, and fertilizing. He understands that the desire for a garden isn't enough; it takes daily action.

The challenge for us in our faith life is the same as it was for me and my garden – it isn't just about planting the seeds, it's committing to the upkeep. Like the well-intentioned gardener who fails to water and weed on a regular basis, we can get off track when our intentions and actions don't line up.

In today's gospel, we are reminded about reconciliation. And for me, it has taken some time and these readings to help understand that this means more than being contrite. God is asking us to align our thoughts and actions. It isn't enough to attend church regularly or say daily prayers if our relationships with one another are broken. Our relationship with God is not separate from our relationship with others. If these relationships aren't working then it is difficult, if not impossible, to have a rich relationship with God. We are being asked to not only talk the talk but walk the walk. The first reading reinforces this message by telling us to turn to God (the relationship thing again) so we can see more clearly. What a great compliment to the gospel's message of coming together.

Committing to a garden requires a high degree of persistence. A dedicated gardener sticks with it even when the plants don't sprout up right away, or the rabbits eat their lettuce. Today, God is asking us to be persistent in our relationships with one another. And like gardening it might not always be easy, there might be a few weeds that need pulling along the way, but if we let the light in we will flourish and grow.

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