

Sowing seeds of generosity: a journey of abundance

By J. DAVEY GERHARD



As the Gospels lead us through the heart of summer, we encounter some of our most beloved and familiar parables and teachings. They are leading us on a journey, Sunday by Sunday, guiding us into a relationship with our labor, our treasure, and our generosity. These examples of Faith-Filled Generosity are taught to us through metaphor, and in July, clearly planting and produce are on our minds.

July's readings begin with an invitation to lighten our burdens. What a tender call from our Savior, who offers to share our work with us, walk with us in the fields of our labor through life. "My yoke is easy, my burden is light," Jesus says to us, and in doing so he calls us into relationship with each other, easing each other's burdens.

Stewardship is an opportunity for us to do just that as we contribute our community ministry and reach out beyond our walls to serve our neighbors.

The Pentecost season continues to shape our faith with metaphors of planting and harvest. The parable of the sower who spreads her seed shamelessly, abundantly, audaciously, throwing opportunity and promise in every direction. Whether it falls on fertile or challenging ground, the point is that the seed is planted, ready to take root, create abundance. The virtual opportunities created by our worship and community gatherings this spring and summer have given us increased reach to our neighbors, spreading the Word and mission of the Church more broadly. As we have beamed our worship and prayer to our living rooms and devices, we bridged distances, kept congregations connected, and continued to support each other in our mutual work.

Finally, as the month continues, the readings call us into discernment of our gifts and treasure. Whether it is pearls or fish or seeds, the Gospel invites us to select our best, our most favored gifts to present to God and our community. "Therefore, every scribe who has been trained for the Kingdom of Heaven is like a master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old," Matthew writes. Faith-Filled Generosity summons us to do the work of presenting our best gifts to our community that we might serve our neighbors with love and abundance. Amen.

FAITH
FILLED

GENEROSITY

For reflection

- What are the seeds of ministry that your congregation has planted in the community?
- How do you make faith-filled decisions about your giving and your annual pledge to your church?
- How does Jesus' invitation to discern your treasures influence your choices?

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