

## Homily: June 16, 2021

By Fr. Virgil Petermeier, osc

Last Sunday, Jesus presented us with the parable of the farmer planting seeds. Today we celebrate our God who we acknowledge as the one who makes whatever true love we plant become an abundant harvest. Yet, how often we feel that what we are doing is worth nothing or that we just are getting nowhere. We doubt and despair about ourselves and/or others. So we call upon our compassionate God, Lord have mercy.

We just heard St. Paul remind us that we will reap much if we sow much. The further good news is that whenever and whatever seeds of true love we sow, “God is able to make every grace abundant for you . . . and will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness.”

Paul does warn us not to do righteous deeds for self-glory. That applies also to praying and fasting. Deeds done for self-glory are not truly deeds of love because they weren't done primarily for the best of others, but for selfish reasons. However, when good deeds are done out of truly loving motivations, God will “repay”—God will give a return. This is true because authentic love is on the top of the list of everlasting and eternal elements. Such divine elements will grow and continue to ripple out into the universe in ways beyond our understanding. True love, which is God, will not stop moving and growing. Now that's good news!

As a present on-going illustration of loving actions having ripple effects and growing new fruit, I wish to introduce you to a Hispanic couple here in Phoenix, whom I discovered in last Sunday's papers. They help other Hispanic couples who have children with special needs.

Gabby and Jose` Orozco used to live in California and found their three-year-old son to be autistic. They struggled to find help in understanding what best to do with and for their son. They had difficulty finding materials even in English. But since Jose` served as a translator, he translated those few materials and began to share it with others, including a group here in Phoenix, called Grupo de Apoyo Para Nin~os—parents of children with all sorts of disabilities.

This group invited them to Phoenix to make a presentation. Ultimately the group asked them to stay here in Phoenix, prompting Gabby and Jose` to move to Phoenix. And since that 2004 move, they have continued to hunt for and translate materials for Hispanics, who are 25% of Arizona's population, many of whom are not fluent in English, especially the 18% increase of Hispanics in the last ten years.

Gabby and Jose` also help parents understand the academic rights of their special-needs children and thereafter call upon schools to make available what their children deserve. Due to the large percentage of Hispanics in Arizona, they are now calling for materials to be prepared and translated by the state.

Their willingness to help this special group and about 3,000 other families over the past fifteen years has made them like real family for these other families. They are an example of how God makes true seeds of love grow and be fruitful. As Paul reminded us, "Whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" with the help of God, who "is able to make every grace abundant for you." May we be such bountiful sowers of God's love.