

Monday 27 July

Today is Monday the 27 July, in the 17th week of Ordinary Time.

The Kyiv Chamber Choir sing In Thy Kingdom from One Thousand Years Of Ukrainian Sacred Music.

Today's reading is from the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 13:31-35

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.' He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.' Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet: 'I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.'

Theologians have written weighty books about the kingdom of heaven. Jesus prefers brief, simple images. You're invited to turn them over in your imagination. Sit for a moment with these images of small seeds and hidden yeast. What do they suggest to you about how God works?

It's often said that today we live in an image-rich culture. What pictures do you have of what the kingdom of heaven is like?

At the end of this passage, Jesus claims to be proclaiming things 'hidden from the foundation of the world'. As you listen again, notice what's new here, what his hearers might not have known before.

Speak for a moment or two to Jesus about the places where you see his kingdom growing in your own life and in the world around you.

(Using the Suscipe Prayer of St Ignatius Loyola):

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.