

While many contemporary commentators exhibit great enthusiasm in relating the concepts of “sacred meal,” “holy table,” and “grains of wheat;” they tend to brush by the themes of “sacrifice,” “altar,” “holy communion,” and “royal priesthood.”

The parable in today’s Holy Gospel from St. Luke tends to be seen on the surface as relating to our own ability to listen to and hear the word of God in Sacred Scripture.

Yet in the 1953 text, *The Church’s Year of Grace*, published in the year before his death, author Fr. Pius Parsch refers to today’s Gospel by saying, “*Today in the Sacrifice proper the Gospel becomes reality as the Eucharistic wheat kernels sink into the soil of our souls; Christ dies in us and with us, and rises again; despite our weakness, the ‘strength of Christ’ can ‘dwell’ in us.*”

Indeed, the *Parable of the Sower* most assuredly should be seen as referring to the Eucharistic Sacrifice – especially if we consider Our Lord’s admonition in St John xii, 24: “*Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.*”

The Gospel verse sung on feasts of Doctors of the Church concisely summarizes this entire parable in a single sentence: “*The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower; all who come to him will live for ever.*”

And while the phrase “*word of God*” may be limited in our collective imaginations to Holy Scripture alone, St John in the prologue to his Gospel reminds us that the Word of God is the Second Person of the Trinity – namely Our Blessed Lord, Jesus Christ – Who gives us Himself to us as food in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar: the Holy Eucharist.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ – whether in Sacramental or spiritual Communion – let us receive Him in such a way that He may take root in our souls. Let this moment of Communion with the Most Holy Trinity through the Sacrifice of the Son of God offered to God the Father transform you through the Sacramental graces poured out by God the Holy Spirit.

May this pre-Lenten time of penance prepare each of us, through the grace of the Eucharist, so that Christ might truly increase in us, as we indeed decrease.