

July 24, 2025

Daily Reflections



THE PURPOSE OF PARABLES

By Sister Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's Gospel

The disciples approached Jesus and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because 'they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.' Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: 'You shall indeed hear but not understand, you shall indeed look but never see. The heart of this people has grown dull, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.' But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

Reflection

In the New Testament, the parable is a wise saying or fictitious short story used by Jesus to illustrate his teaching. It is a technical term whose root meaning involves the placing of things side by side for the sake of comparison that leads to understanding. A parable invites reflection. Only those who are prepared to explore its meaning can come to understand the presence of God's kingdom in Jesus and his ministry. Faith is invited to use the energy of exploration. Parables were intended to clarify the Kingdom of God not as a human invention or simply something of this earth. Those hearing the parables were invited to see heaven, i.e., the Presence of God, through the eyes of faith.

The symbolic language serves Jesus' purpose. He emphasizes human responsibility to respond to God's gift. The reference to Isaiah 6:9—10 is to place the lack of understanding on the people who deliberately close their ears to God's word, in contrast to those who do respond to God's grace. We do have a choice.



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For Pondering

Recall a favorite New Testament parable.

- How does it reflect God's relationship to you/your life?
- What is your response today?
- What prayer arises from your heart? Hear God's response to you.

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