

The Parable of the Sower



Nedelja, 16. julij: – Jezus v priliki pove, da je Božja beseda kot seme, ki se seje, se nam oznanja. Naše srce pa je kot zemlja, pripravljena sprejeti ali je ne sprejeti.

Ne glede na našo pripravljenost ali nepripravljenost, Bog po Cerkvi oznanja, seje Božjo besedo, da bi se Božje kraljestvo, ki je dobrota, ljubezen, mir, usmiljenje in odpuščanje, utrjevalo med nami in bi tako tudi mi obrodili sad vreden večnega življenja.

Z zaupanjem prosimo Jezusa, naj nas navdihuje in spodbuja, da bomo

odstranjevali kamenje, trnje iz njive svojega srca, da bo seme Božje besede vzklilo, rastlo in obrodilo sad v dobroti, miru, ljubezni in usmiljenju.

The seed falls, the Word is proclaimed... The words of Jesus do not all bear fruit. Knowing this did not stop Jesus from speaking, but he continued to proclaim good news, truth and life to any who would listen. I take care to review the measures by which I value my actions and words. I pray for the strength to continue speaking and acting – even in the absence of evident encouraging results... We need to be reminded that God's plans will not be pushed and trampled over, that the Kingdom, Kingdom of God will be established. - I should ask God in my daily prayer to help me to hear Jesus' word, to meditate on it and to take it to heart.



SLOVENSKI DAN – Nedelja 16. julij:
- To je praznik naših narodnih korenin, praznik našega naroda, naše kulture in naše zgodovine, to je praznik pripadnosti slovenski skupnosti v Montrealu.

Neka pesem pravi:

»Slovenec sem, Slovenec sem, tako je mati d'jala, ko me je dete pestovala!«

»Stvar, ki nam naj draga in ljuba bo, kakor naše svetlo oko, je naša slovenska domovina – naša beseda materna!... Hvalimo, sloveče može, rodoljube naše... Ljubili so svoje ljudstvo, skrbeli za njegovo omiko, za lepo petje... kakor vseh domačih obredov in lepih navad.« – bl. Anton Martin Slomšek

Pred začetkom maše bo preds. cerkenega odbora ga. Josie Glavač pozdravila zbrane. Po maši, pred kosilom bo spregovoril g. Lennoxie Lusabe CM, nato ambasador R Slovenije v Kanadi g. Andrej Rode. – Po kosilu vesel popoldan in prijateljsko druženje ob zvokih domače glasbe, ansambel ŠIBAJ. Popoldan: **TOMBOLA!**



Slovenian Day at Montreal
July 16, 2023
Jubilee Celebrations

One of the theories of philosophy of time states that the past and the future exist only in the present. The past is comprehended in reference to the present and so is the future. Indeed, we cannot talk of the past nor the future without making reference to the present.

This year, we celebrate Rev. Franc Letonja's 50 years in the priesthood and 40 years as parish priest of St. Vladimir parish, Montreal. Rev. Franc Letonja's celebrations give us an opportunity to celebrate him, but also to celebrate us—the Slovenian Community of St. Vladimir. Letonja's jubilee gives us an opportunity to stop and appreciate our past. To thank God for the far he has brought us.

As we open the chest of memories, we see that the beginning of the parish community "Association Slovene Catholic, Montreal", is the month of May, 1957, when Rev. Jožef Časl CM arrived in Montreal as a spiritual shepherd of Slovenians in Montreal and the surrounding area. This beginning connected the community and directed it towards its goal, becoming a parish. This wish was realized in 1963. In the month of October, the Slovene community "Association Slovene Catholique, Montreal" bought the church, and on January 1st, 1964, it became official, as it began to keep its books.

Parishioners who lived in the immediate vicinity of the church, which was on the corner of St. Denis and Marie Anne Est (close to the centre of the city), began to move to the suburbs. As the number of parishioners living near the church began to change, and so was the need for change for relocation. In 1982, after discussions, consultations and searching for a solution, the community decided to purchase a commercial building (3470 Boulevard St. Joseph Est, Montreal) to convert it into a new parish centre. When the formalities at the diocese were settled, they bought this building and sold the previous Church. The community moved into the "new," but not yet renovated premises in October 1982.

They enthusiastically began the renovations. Parish priest Rev. Janez Jeretina CM and the Church committee had a big task. With joint efforts and volunteers' work, the renovation under the leadership of entrepreneur, Danilo Sivec, progressed despite the illness of the parish priest.

Already, in the spring of 1983, they determined when the renovation work should be completed so that the new Church would be blessed. The goal was the beginning of September 1983 and the Rev. Janez Jeretina CM requested Msgr. Franc Kramberger, bishop of Maribor in Slovenia to do the blessing. The bishop accepted the invitation and arranged for Sunday, September 11, 1983, to bless the new Church.

During the intensive renovations and preparations for the blessing, an unfortunate event occurred for the parish, i.e., Rev. Janez Jeretina CM, who started the renovation of the new centre with the committee and his parishioners, succumbed to his illness.

The superior of the Congregation of the Mission in Slovenia sent a new, younger parish priest to the community, Rev. Franc Letonja CM. He courageously and selflessly continued the work of his predecessor. This year, Rev. Letonja celebrates 40 years as parish priest but 50 years as priest.

The jubilee of Rev. Letonja brings to our minds the recent jubilees in the parish community of St. Vladimir. It is important to mention the jubilees, which are important milestones in the life of the parish community:

- ▶ in 2003 - 40 years of the community and the purchase of the first church;
- ▶ in 2008 - 25 years of the blessing (dedication) of the present church;
- ▶ in 2014 - 50 years of the parish, the ceremony was led by the Archbishop of Montreal, Msgr. Christian Lépine.
- ▶ in 2023 – 60 years of the establishing of Association Slovene Catholique, Montreal, July 3, 1963, and buying of the church, August 22, 1963.

Our celebrations this year bring fond memories of these Jubilees. It brings memories of a community with strong faith. A Community with foundations in the faith of the generations past. These memories make the present worth of the celebrations that we are having. But the present also inexplicably leads us to asking tough questions about the future.

We have just talked about a memorable past, a past that had families coming from far and wide to celebrate together the sacraments, the life being lived together, and so much more. However, while we can speak of the past years as having been a lively community with both old and young celebrating church life together, can we say same of the present? While we reminiscence those times days when the Church was full for Sunday Masses, can we say the

same of the present? We remember the times we had long lines of the congregants to receive the Eucharist, can we say the same of the present?

Baptisms are there, but very rare, weddings are there, but very rare... If the future exists in the present, if the future is shaped by the present, should we then be worried about the future? I am very sure that many of us here cannot escape thoughts of pessimism about the future of the Church. The writing already is on the wall: the numbers of people going to Churches has dwindled drastically, the number of those still with faith in God has dwindled drastically, the number of those giving their time and energy to Church activities has dwindled drastically... And what about St. Vladimir? Does our Church have a future? What will happen of our Church after Rev. Letonja?

Humanly speaking, we want to have answers to the questions that we are asking. However, if we look back at the history that we are celebrating today, it has not been fully our own making. God has always been present to us, blessing us and seeing us through. Psalm 127 (1-2) says, "If the Lord does not build the house, the work of the builders is useless, if the Lord does not protect the city, it does no good for the sentries to stand guard. It is useless to work so hard for a living, getting up early and going to bed late. For the Lord provides for those he loves, while they are asleep."

This God who has been with us is not going to abandon us. Deuteronomy (31,6) exalts us with the following words, "Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."

We have to cheer up then! We have to have a living hope, one that nothing can take from us because our hope is based on God and His Word. For God's word to fail, God would have to fail. God cannot fail; Jesus' resurrection proves this. Just as God and His promises never fade away, neither will our hope, for a bright future.

This is encouraging, because no matter what comes up, whatever need may arise, God has already planned to prosper you. He is saying to you that He already has it covered. Understand that God's plan swallows up pain. His provision is bigger than any need. And God's peace conquers any attack. Therefore, your future is bright, blessed, and beautiful.

Know also that wisdom is like honey for you: "Know that wisdom is such to your soul; if you find it, you will find a future and your hope will not be cut off" (Proverbs 24:14).