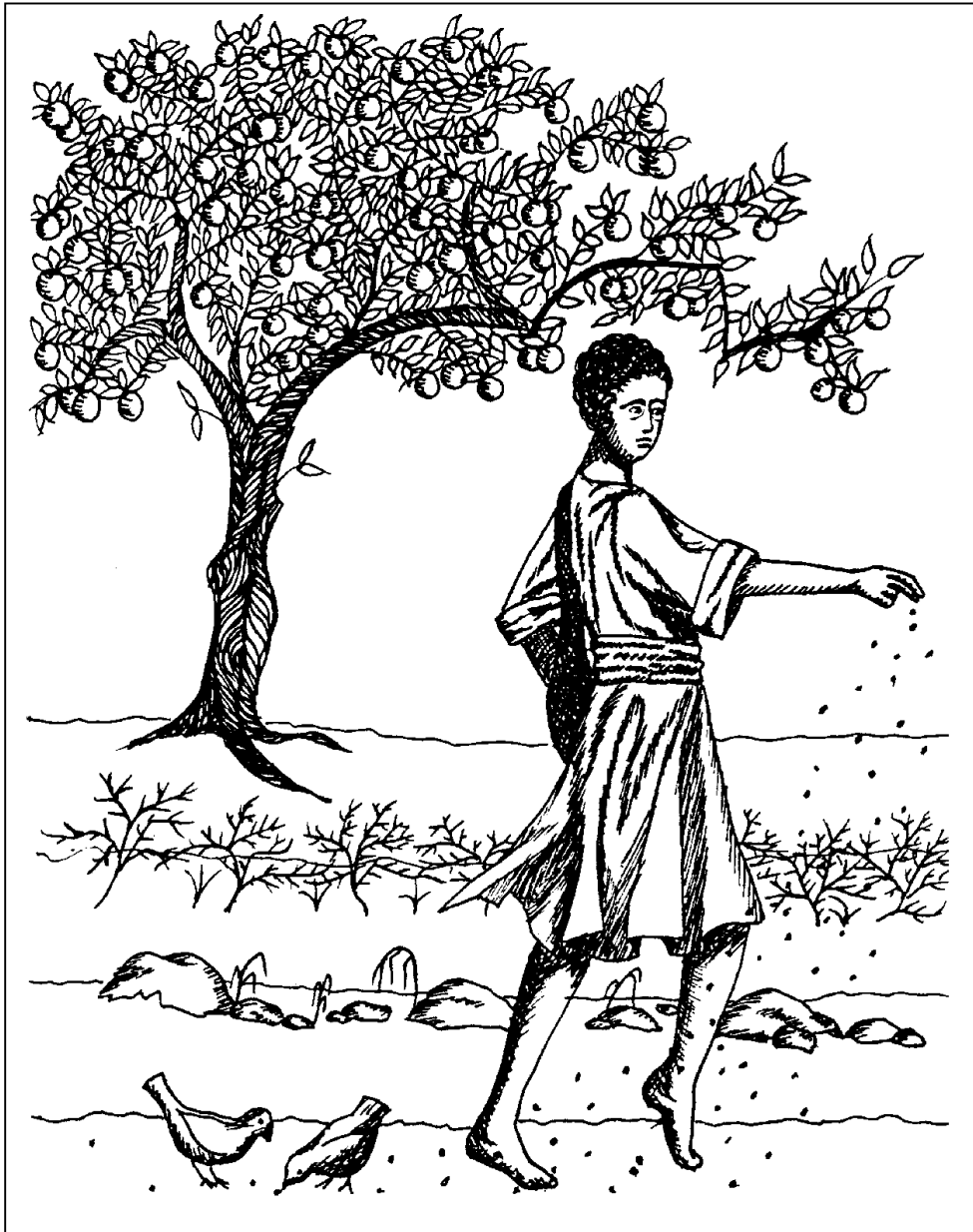


The Story of Planting Seeds

Luke 8:4-15 - the Parable of the Sower



Jesus Christ told a story about a person who went out to plant seeds. As this person was planting, some of the seeds fell on the side of the road. Some of the seeds were eaten by the birds. Some seeds landed on the rocks and grew for a little bit, but died because they had no water. Some of the seeds sprouted around the weeds and grew for a little bit, but the weeds soon took over and the sprouts died. And some of the seeds

fell in good soil and grew and grew and grew into a big tree with much fruit. Jesus Christ said that He wants us to be like the good soil when we hear about God's Word. If our hearts are good and honest, like the good soil, the Good News about Jesus Christ is like the seeds so we can grow into strong Christian people who do good things for God.



Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787 A.D.)

“Sir, Whose image is this?”

“It is mine,” answered the emperor. Then Stephen, a monk, threw the coin on the ground and stepped on it. He was seized by imperial guards and taken away to be punished.

“Remember this!” cried Stephen as he was being led away. “If I am punished for dishonoring the image of an earthly king, what punishment do they deserve who burn the icon of Christ!” Such was one of many scenes during the controversy over the use of icons in the Church during the seventh and eighth centuries.

“Icon-smashers” or iconoclasts -- that’s what they were called. They unsuccessfully tried for almost two centuries to destroy holy icons as forms of spirituality and Christian education. They contended that Christ being divine could not be depicted through art and that icons smacked of idolatry -- indeed there were some great abuses of icons from time to time. But the great Church Fathers were convinced that the Christian faith can validly be expressed through art forms. They taught that HOLY ICONS ARE

NOT TO BE WORSHIPPED BUT VENERATED OR REVERED -- THE RESPECT BEING GIVEN NOT TO THE WOOD AND PAINT BUT TO THE PERSON BEING DEPICTED ON THE ICON. Christ took on human flesh, a part of earth’s matter; so it was possible to depict Him through material symbols. The Gospels are verbal images portraying through words the divinity and ministry of Jesus. So also holy icons portray the divine sonship and actions of Jesus by means of paints and colors. Just as we remember Christ and experience His presence when we prayerfully read the Gospels, so also WE REMEMBER HIM AND EXPERIENCE HIS PRESENCE WHEN WE PRAYERFULLY BEHOLD HIM IN ICONS.

The Gospel Reading for the Sunday of the Holy Fathers is Lk. 8:4-15, the Parable of the Sower. This relates to the Holy Fathers’ working in the field of the Lord.

The Parable of the Sower

Luke 8:4-15

Some seeds fell by the wayside. Some seeds fell on the rocks and grew for awhile but died because they lacked moisture. Some seeds fell among the weeds and also grew for awhile but were choked out by the weeds. Other seeds fell on the good ground and sprang up into a tree bearing much fruit. The parable is this: The seed is the Word of God. If our hearts are good and honest, if we hear the Word of God and keep it, we too will become fruitful in the Kingdom of God as we patiently grow as Christians. Read this passage at home!



The Story of Planting Seeds - Luke 8:4-15



The big tree grew because the seeds were planted in good soil. Jesus said we should be like the good soil when we hear His Good News. God will help us grow and do good things.

· THE HOLY FATHERS ·

