Jesus was constantly sowing seeds through his teaching ministry. Many seeds failed to take root, but he continued to sow day and night.

- The seeds planted for Judas Iscariot fell on a hardened heart and envy and greed came and ate him up.
- Some seed fell on a young man with many possessions. He went away sad for the seed fell on rocky ground, and Jesus explained “it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God” (Mt 19:24).
- Some seed fell upon the Samaritan woman at the well. Up to that point in time, all the seed sown for her was scattered. Nothing took root. She had had five husbands and the man she was with now was not her husband. Then Jesus offered her water welling up to eternal life.
- “Many of the Samaritans of that town [30, 60, 100 fold] began to believe in him because of the word of the woman” (John 4: 39). “The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone (Psalm 118:22).
- Some seed fell on the scribes and Pharisees. Jealousy overcame them and they conspired with other thorns to crucify Jesus.
- Some seed fell on Calvary. While the disciples scattered in fear, Joseph of Arimathea took the limp body of Jesus off the cross, wrapped it in a burial shroud, and replanted the body of Jesus in the tomb. He was buried but rose on the third day, giving new life to the dead more than 30, 60, or a hundredfold.

The resurrected Jesus continued to sow seeds. Where previous efforts had failed, he tried again until the sterile seeds began to produce.

- Encountering the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, Jesus was extremely disappointed that all the seeds sown before his death failed to take root. The soil was not deep, and when the Son of God rose from the dead, they were clueless. “Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” (Luke 24:25-26) Jesus replanted the seeds until their hearts were burning with desire. He took bread and blessed it. They received his Precious Body in Holy Communion and recognized him in the breaking of the bread. Then they couldn’t wait to go out and sow seeds.

- To the disciples locked away for fear of the Jews, Jesus appeared and sowed seeds of peace repeatedly. Instead of water welling up to eternal life, he breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost Sunday, Peter went out to preach and told of the resurrection of Jesus. Many in the audience had shouted “Crucify him, crucify him!” on Good Friday (Jn 19:6). “Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.” (Acts 2: 38,41)

Jesus has sewn seeds in our lives. Sometimes we are clueless like the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Cardinal Toppo from India told the story of a Hindu teenager who had been hanging around the Catholic priests for some time, in a school setting. The boy was a spiritual seeker but no one was interested in giving him life-giving water from the well. The boy asked deep questions about Christian belief. But the seed he sowed fell on the shallow grounds of priests too busy to seriously answer his questions.

“At one point one of the priests gave the boy a copy of the gospels and told him to read them and then come back with questions and reactions. The boy came back more or less flabbergasted and accusing. He wanted to be sure he had got it right, and so he demanded clarification. “Jesus is risen from the dead?” he asked, “really risen from the dead?” “Yes,” they calmly answered, not displeased at his excitement. “Why didn’t you tell me!” he shouted at them, astonished that they would not have told him that straight out from the start. (Driscoll, Jeremy. Awesome Glory. Liturgical Press. Kindle Edition.)

Jesus sows seeds in our lives and sometimes we work against them taking root. For the crop to bear fruit, we must work together applying a lot of elbow grease, tilling the soil, pulling the weeds, and nurturing the plants until they are ready to produce. A priest friend of mine told me about a very difficult time in his ministry. The parishioners were very divided. No one wanted to sow seeds together. The church was divided into factions. Each had good people in it but when it came to working with others, there was no cooperation. Group A would have nothing to do with group B and so on. Then a real disaster struck. The church burned down. People had to worship in a gym as a temporary solution that lasted a number of years. Isaiah tells us that the word of the Lord “shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.” The turf wars subsided when no one had any turf of their own to claim. In time, with strong leadership, the church was able to rebuild in more than one way. The new church was an improved church because everyone had a shared experience they could come together around. The new church building was nice, but the cooperation among everyone was the key to the new and “improved” church. “The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest” (Luke 8:8).