

## *Lent 2010*



Lenten Meditation # 3 (Second Sunday in Lent)

### **LENTEN GARDENS** **"WHAT KIND OF SOIL?"**

One of Jesus' parables seems almost tailor made for Lent. It is about gardening. Gardeners know that seeds grow better in some spots than in others. In the same way, Lent can be a very productive time for some people, while others gain little from it. The parable suggests some reasons for this.

Jesus describes how a man went out to plant his field. (See Mark 4: 1-9). Some of his seed fell on the road where birds came and ate it. Other seed fell amidst stones; even if it started to sprout, it soon withered and died. Some fell into decent soil, but thorn plants crowded the good ones out. Other seed fell on fertile ground and produced a rewarding harvest.

Approaching the Lenten season, we often have our appointment books already full and our minds are cluttered. Unless we make a special effort, thoughts of enriching our inner life and nourishing our spirits meet the same fate as the seeds. Seed on the road or among thorns loses out because of our busyness. Stony soil comes when we fail to heed our inner longing for richer life or do not give it priority. How do we keep this from happening, so Lent can make a difference?

One essential is the simple but problematic matter of "time", creative thinking time. Many people have found that taking fifteen minutes for quiet reflection during the work day makes the remaining time more productive. We work not harder but smarter. In gardening terms, put down the hoe for a few moments and enjoy the beauty. A second essential is "hopeful visioning". What results are we hoping for in our lives? What do we most want to reap from our life's labors?

Jesus came that we might have abundant life. It has been said that "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." Perhaps, this year's Lenten season can be the beginning of a new style of life - purposeful life of productivity and beauty.



