

**16<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of Ordinary Time**  
**Memorial of St. Lawrence of Brindisi**  
**Homily of Bishop Barres**  
**St. Agnes Cathedral**  
**July 21, 2021**

The different classifications of soil in Matthew 13 prompt us to examine the blend of various soils that are often mixed in our souls and impact our receptivity to the inspired Word of God.

Some seed falls on the path and is eaten by the birds. How often we can embrace temptations to superficiality and how often we block and resist real spiritual depth and the Cross of Christ that brings us to spiritual depth.

Some seed falls on rocky ground. The seed sprouts and makes an initial appearance of growth but cannot take root. We can all have sudden spiritual enthusiasms that appear one day and are gone the next. The Word of God calls us to fidelity each day, every moment, in season and out of season.

Some seed falls among thorns and are choked. The thorns of sin, sinful habit, addiction when surrendered to lead to the choking thorns of self-destruction.

Every time we hear this passage we ask the Holy Spirit to turn over the soil of our souls. We ask the Holy Spirit to aerate the soil and to give us a new, fresh and vigilant start.

Saints like St. Lawrence of Brindisi who lived from 1559 to 1619 teach us and intercede for us that the soil of our souls and the soil of the entire Church can be rich, potent and powerful.

This Franciscan Capuchin Doctor of the Church was a theologian, biblical expert, linguist, diplomat, saint and scholar.

He models for us, as all the saints do, how to cultivate the rich soil of the soul that receives the Word of God with humility, docility, fortitude and a desire to be instruments of holiness and mission.

As Catholics, we know deeply the interdependence of Word and Sacrament, of the Bible and the Catholic Mass.

This weekend of July 24-25 we will be entering a very powerful time in the Lectionary Cycle (B) sequence for the Sundays of July 25<sup>th</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, August 8<sup>th</sup> and August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We will focus during this period on what we call the Bread of Life Discourse from the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John.

Studying, praying and contemplating John 6 over these next weekends is an opportunity for us to “rekindle our Eucharistic amazement”, rekindle our contemplation of Catholic Eucharistic theology and spirituality, and rekindle our Eucharistic evangelization.

Together we pray for a “Massive” return to the Catholic Mass on Long Island!