

MANAGING DISAPPOINTMENTS AND APPLYING THE LESSONS

Text: ...A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up (Matthew 13:3-4).

Reading: **Matthew 13:1-23**

Hymn: **Best of all is God is with us – StF 610**

The Gospel before us, ‘The parable of the Sower’, brings me memories of my farming adventures when growing. One mischievous afternoon, when sowing maize/corn with my mum and other family members, I was so tired, I wanted to go home. So, instead of sowing two to four grains in a hole, I started putting handfuls in the holes. Within a short time, the seeds got finished. Though my mum did not understand why, she had no choice but to let us go home. I was happy but in less than a week, my deeds found me out.

Without stretching the parable, we realise that the farmer in question would have known and expected that the method of broadcasting the seed that was used at the time meant that there would be disappointments. Not all the seeds will have the opportunity of germinating and growing to the full to bear fruit. In order to manage his disappointments, he/she would have sowed more than enough, making up for the ones that fell on unfruitful grounds. Secondly, looking back from the outcome of the method, he/she would have learnt some lessons and adjusted the next time he/she went out to sow, ensuring that waste was reduced to the barest minimum.

COVID-19 might have brought lots of disappointments to many of us in all areas of our lives – family, work, leisure, finances, etc. The church has also received a fair share of such disappointments. We might have not been forewarned to manage expectations and we can forgive ourselves if things go wrong during and probably after the pandemic. Yet, we cannot fail to be forward looking, learning the lessons of the pandemic, and therefore planning ahead when there is a fresh opportunity to ‘sow’ again. We must not go back to what was normal. Instead, we must define our new normal, based on what God has taught us during this pandemic. There must be a new strategic way of living as individuals, families, communities, and churches, such that irrespective of future unexpected eventualities, we can still sow seeds that will fall on fruitful ground and bear multiple fruits. We cannot continue to sow handfuls of grain into each hole and expect to reap a bountiful harvest. Let the post COVID-19 new normal be a fruitful field that guarantees success and fruitfulness, even when conditions are not the best. Amen.