
The Seeds of Life and the Cathedral

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by the Rev. Deacon Juan Sandoval, Deacon for Hispanic Ministries and Pastoral Care

I recently revisited the parable of the Sower and the seeds. I have reflected on the seeds planted in my own life, as well as the seeds sown at the Cathedral of St. Philip. Faith formation is often planted quietly over time and later bears fruit.

Growing up in a home next to my paternal grandmother provided an important seed. Often, my Grandmother Juanita would come by and take me with her to morning Eucharist, and at other times she would take me to the evening rosary service at St. Anthony's. I started attending during the week at the age of three, although I was also in church every Sunday with my parents. My grandmother would explain the services to me and help me in prayer as well.

At the age of five, my family moved to a new home about six miles away because a new sibling was on the way. I was not sure what to expect at St. Catherine's Church, but I began attending Sunday school classes there. These classes offered a more formal method of learning, and though I was frightened at first, I learned to enjoy discovering more about God and Jesus.

My family moved again when another sibling was on the way. There, we attended St. Vincent de Paul. My church education continued with classes most Saturdays. We studied church doctrine, and each year we used a more advanced book to learn more about the Church and Jesus.

As a teenager, I attended Saturday evening classes offered at St. Vincent's. These classes built upon all we had previously studied, and they gave us more opportunities for discussion about a variety of topics.

During these years, the seed was planted and helped form me into a better, more informed Christian. The seeds the Sower, Jesus, scattered into the various soils were coming to fruition. Many of my dear friends who also attended these classes continued to study doctrine and to love God and Jesus. My love of God and the Church has continued throughout my life and led me to serve in many capacities until God called to me and I said, "Here am I, Lord; send me."

Here at the Cathedral, I see so many seeds coming to blossom, and I am constantly in awe of the children and adults who attend the many educational and wonderful offerings that assist them on their journey toward being closer to God.

The young children who attend Godly Play on Sundays are given an opportunity to better understand the Bible, the Church, and God. How important are these sessions? I wonder.

The teenagers are invited to attend weekly Bible study and other activities that lead to wonderful camaraderie. These young people grow into the Church and toward God by serving in various capacities. Many bloom into acolytes, lectors, or junior ushers. I love seeing how many, over the years, continue to serve and grow.

The Cathedral is so blessed to have many volunteers who are willing to nurture the seeds of all ages. Like a flower garden, we must water them, fertilize them, and wait for the seeds to become the beautiful flowers we hoped for. Some seeds take longer to blossom, but the education, care, and hospitality of St. Philip's provide the nutrients they need to reach upward and become wonderful members of the church community and children of God.

Ecclesiastes reminds us of this: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."

Perhaps we may remember the words from Isaiah 6:8: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'"

Gracious God, thank you for the seeds of faith you have planted in our lives and for the people who have nurtured them with love, patience, teaching, and prayer. Continue to bless the Cathedral of St. Philip, its children, youth, adults, teachers, volunteers, and all who seek to grow closer to you. Help us to tend the seeds entrusted to us, to rejoice when they blossom, and to trust your timing when they take longer to grow. When you call us to serve, give us open hearts and willing spirits, so that we may answer with faith: Here am I, Lord; send me. Amen.

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