

John 16:23 (NKJV) *Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.*

Today is the fifth Sunday after Easter, Rogation Sunday. The word Rogation comes from the Latin *rogare* which means to ask. This is the time when we are supposed to pray and ask God for a good crop.

Since ancient time, mankind has asked for a good harvest, one sufficient to keep them from starving the next winter. This Sunday and the next couple of days are set aside as the Rogation Days when we are to implore God to keep us fed. . Today and over the next two days we, as the Church, ask God to forgive us for our shortcomings and our negligence, to forgive us our sins. This was done originally so that God would not punish us by holding back a good harvest, for not punishing us for our sins.

In the old days, we would have said the Great Litany at the beginning of this Mass after we had processed all around the parish bounds. We would have prayed the Great Litany for God to forgive us our sins.

This may seem kind of out of touch with the way we live today but for many people around the world a poor crop means hunger or even starvation. For those of us who garden, we may not go hungry but it will impact us.

In our lives, if we are old enough, we can remember a time when we were more attuned to the earth but now we have such creature comforts as air conditioning and central heat that we hardly notice the change of seasons much less experience the rhythm of time passing We have electricity and running water. We live in houses that most of the world would consider mansions. For most of us we have forgotten what dirt feels like in our hands.

But today the Church pulls us back to a more simple time; a time when we relied upon ourselves and each other but more importantly on God in our daily lives just to survive.

Today, we blessed our plants and seeds. Today, we asked for God's providence. Today, we recognized in some small part our dependence upon almighty God, our total dependence upon God.

We do not OWN anything. There is absolutely NOTHING that is truly ours but our sins.

But we, in our blindness and our ego-centric ways, continue on down the path to perdition thinking we are in charge of our fate. Either that or we feel that we do not have to make any sort of commitment to God; that He loves ME so much that surely he wouldn't possibly send ME to Hell.

Even though we are insulated in so many ways from the harsh reality of life that so many people on this planet experience, we are not totally removed from needing God in each and every one of our lives on a daily basis.

We may not have to walk ten miles to get a bucket of water or get up a dawn and gather twigs so we can build a small flame to cook over, but we still need God. We still need God just to exist.

We heard this morning **James 1:22 (NKJV)** *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

Part of being doers of the word and not hearers only is to recognize that we need God; that we need God more than we need ourselves.

Our forefathers and mothers knew they needed God. Without God they would starve, Without God giving them a good crop, a good harvest they would starve.

We have seen over the last few weeks the awesome power that God has. If you read the psalms carefully you can pick up on the volcanic activity and the earthquakes that occurred in that part of the world.

We forget that God is not some cosmic Santa Claus. We need to remember that someday this present earth is going to be destroyed and we are going to be judged for our actions. We don't need to be axe murderers to be on the wrong side of the separation of the sheep from the goats, all we need to do is to put ourselves ahead of God.

If we think that we are the ones who are in control then we are in trouble. We better get busy in recognizing that it is God that is the boss.

Today is a good time to start. Today is a good time to start with us realizing we have to depend on God's providence as we observe this Rogation Sunday.

I don't think there is more beautiful expression of God's hand in all this than in today's Psalm.

*Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it; * thou makest it very plenteous.*

*The river of God is full of water: * thou preparest their corn, for so thou providest for the earth.*

*Thou waterest her furrows; thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof; * thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it.*

*Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; * and thy clouds drop fatness.*

*They shall drop upon the dwellings of the wilderness; * and the little hills shall rejoice on every side.*

*The folds shall be full of sheep; * the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing.*

Amen.