

Dear Friends,

In today's Parable of the Sower we are challenged to see how the word of God has taken root in our lives; we are challenged to see how embracing the faith of the sower, our simplest acts of kindness may be seeds yielding an abundant harvest.

Two weeks ago I was the recipient of one of those acts of kindness that can yield an abundant harvest for God's kingdom. Two weekends ago I was surprised by your kindness and generosity on the occasion of my 30th anniversary to the priesthood. Originally my plan was to quietly celebrate this gift of God's call, but others had different ideas and I am glad they did. The reception after all the Masses, the balloons, the banner, your cards and gifts, all the delicious food brought me much joy, and I am humbled by your thoughtfulness and caring spirit.

I am not quite sure of everyone who played a part in the weekend, but I did see the parish secretary, Bobbie Woollen, quietly moving about the center, hoping I would not see her, so I suspect she had a significant hand in the event, so thank you Bobbie. I also heard that two of our teens devoted many hours to baking 450 cupcakes for the occasion. To Sarah DeGrange and Kylie Tittinger, I also say thank you, and to anyone else who helped, my many thanks. I enjoyed everything the weekend offered and will remember it for years.

I also want to extend my thanks and congratulations to Deacon Bil Carter for his assistance in the parish throughout his years of formation. Along with you, I want to wish him happiness and God's blessings as he begins his ministerial service at Sacred Heart Church in LaPlata.

If you had not heard, Deacon Jim Tittinger recently received a new assignment. Beginning this month he will serve as a deacon at St. Joseph's Church in Pomfret. Though he was only with us for a short time since his return from Virginia, his assistance was greatly appreciated and we wish him God's blessings as well.

In today's parable Jesus challenges us to be both the sower and the seed. We are to sow seeds of encouragement, joy and reconciliation and imitate the seed's total self-giving yielding a great harvest for God's kingdom. The kindness and generosity seen in our parish shows that we are taking his challenge to heart.

Peace and blessings,
Father John