



The Seasons of Life

By Fanny Pedraza

A mantle of snow covered the ground when I experienced winter for the first time in my life. By the end of the season I moved to a building surrounded by leafless plants that looked more like dead branches.

Soon after, I saw those scrawny little bushes growing tiny sprouts, which grew rather quickly and covered themselves with healthy green leaves. Some time later, flowers appeared.

What a pleasant feeling to experience the changes of the seasons — seeing nature gradually dress herself with such beautiful colors, being kissed warmly by brother sun's rays and later gradually surrendering to be covered by the white blanket of winter.

Through the seasons of nature God's word invites us to reflect on the seasons of our life and on our role as stewards of His soil and seeds.

After reading reflectively Mark 4:1-20, respond to the following questions privately or with the members of your family: Who are you at this moment of your life: the sower, the seed or the soil?

We all go through seasons of planting and being planted; our soil is not always ready for the seed, we may need to remove rocks, pull out weeds and scare away birds that may eat our seeds. What elements threaten / help your soil to produce healthy fruit? What are you / others sowing in your soil?

A period of waiting follows; we water the seed and fertilize the soil; we take courage if inclement weather threatens the life of our garden; we may have failed to maintain it properly and may need to do some replanting.

What are your feelings and expectations while you wait for your harvest?

The end of the growing season comes. We regard autumn with melancholy as it marks the transition between long and bright days and short and chilly ones. This time of harvesting is the most intense, since it requires a careful process of sorting, cleaning, and distributing our crop. The fruit obtained may be cause for celebration or disappointment.

What is your attitude during the harvesting? What causes you to be joyful or sad during this process? What do you do with your crop?

Winter then begins, and nighttime predominates. This time, which is the coldest and darkest of the year, makes us yearn the previous seasons of our lives: the joyful activities of the summer and the gathering of flowers and fruits are gone. We have come to our last season; we let our soil rest...

How do you embrace the winter of your life? How do the words of 2 Timothy 4:7-8 resound in your heart? Do you rejoice in the thought that an eternal spring is coming? What seeds are you leaving for those who come after you?

Through the seasons of nature we may hear God's invitation to reflect on our own life and on the fact that we can prepare our soil, plant seeds, gather fruits or sit back and rest no matter the season in which we are presently living.

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