

Sermon notes

Isaiah 55:10-13; Psalm 65: (1-8), 9-14; Romans 8:1-11; [Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23](#)

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. Rom 8:1-2

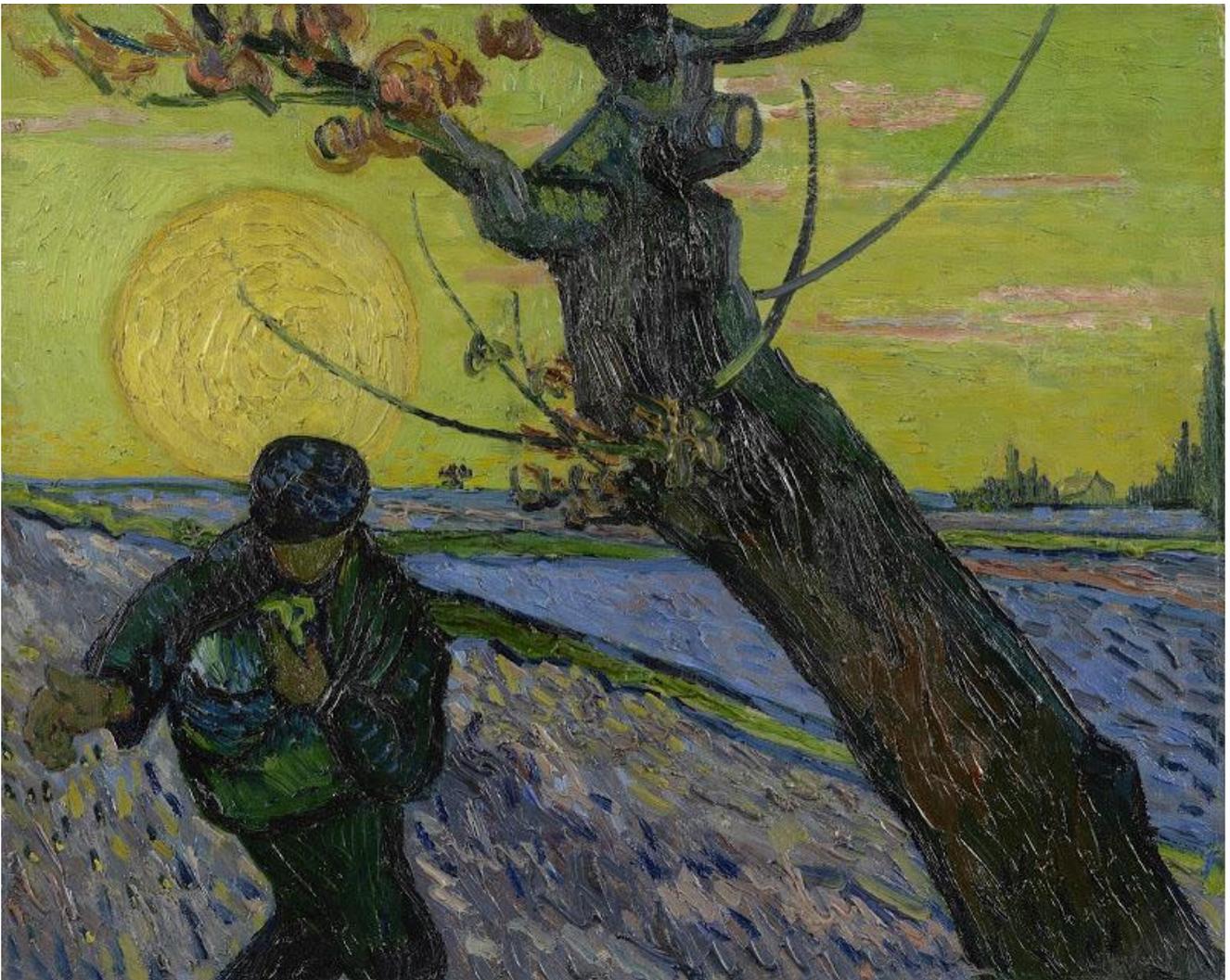
What would it mean to be truly free of regret, set free from the weight of sin, should haves, would haves, and wishes-- forgiven to start anew? What would it mean to you to be open to receive the abundance of God's love and to share it with all of God's people?

In the letter to the Roman's Paul writes to tell the people of faith that they are able to live in a new reality of freedom, because we are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus—we only have to see it, or hear it, or embrace it.

Vincent Van Gogh was a son of a pastor and sought to preach the Gospel, first as a missionary, and later, after much struggle, in his art. Below are two pictures of the Sower, a pastoral image, but for Van Gogh, a religious image as well. The first picture, contains the Sower and the symbol of life and resurrection in the tree.

The second shows the Sower, from the parable as one with the landscape, a reminder of the abundance of God's love that Van Gogh himself saw all around him.

To see these in the context of Van Gogh preaching the Good News, offers a reminder that God in all things is a call to respond to the Abundant Giver.





Note the birds who arrive as the Sower sows and the path that disappears into the field.



BULLETIN
INSERTS

**July 12, 2020 – Pentecost 6 (A)
The Feast of Nathan Söderblom**

Swedish bishop Nathan Söderblom was the first member of the clergy to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Born Lars Olof Jonathan Söderblom, on January 15, he graduated from Uppsala University in 1883 and was ordained a priest in the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) in 1893. He earned his doctorate in theology at the Sorbonne and taught theology at the University of Uppsala until his appointment as Archbishop of Uppsala in 1914.

During the First World War, Archbishop Söderblom called on Christian leaders to work for peace and justice. He believed that all Christian church communities were called to fight unhealthy nationalism, racism, militarism and the oppression of minorities. At the same time, he proposed that Jesus' message of love disseminated from pulpits, in newspapers, and in schools to create a powerful body of Christian opinion across national borders in favor of peace.

He famously wrote in his work, *The Content of Christian Faith*:

“For me everything is absorbed by the one big question – the question of reconciliation and healing [restoration.] Do we see God’s way in the terrible chaos of this world; the way which for the human reason is a source of offense, but remains the only possible way? This way does not avoid the tragedy of human life but goes through the very middle of it.”

Archbishop Söderblom took great interest in the early liturgical renewal movement among Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans. He saw a profound connection between liturgical worship, personal prayer, and social justice. In 1925 he invited Anglican, Reformed, Lutheran, and Orthodox leaders to Stockholm and together they formed the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work. His ecumenical work led eventually to the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948.

Söderblom’s advocacy for Church unity as a means toward to accomplishing world peace earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930. After his death in Uppsala, Sweden, in 1931 his body was interred in Uppsala Cathedral. He is commemorated in the liturgical calendar of The Episcopal Church on July 12.



Collect for the Feast of Nathan Söderblom

Almighty God, we bless your Name for the life and work of Nathan Söderblom, Archbishop of Uppsala, who helped to inspire the modern liturgical revival and worked tirelessly for cooperation among Christians. Inspire us by his example, that we may ever strive for the renewal of your Church in life and worship, for the glory of your Name; who with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Office of formation of the Episcopal Church