

Celebrating the Seed Time

Rogation Services are a time for blessing the people, the land and the seed ...

I applaud congregations that have Rogation Services to bless the seed-time and pray for the lives and livelihoods of those connected with the land.

But churches need to let agricultural people know these rituals are occurring. And they need to find ways to make meaningful links between 20th century liturgies and 21st century participants.

My father's vision of his calling as a farmer was formed in the Thirties when the theme song of the National Farm Radio Forum lauded "these giants of the earth ... (who) have fed the world upon the grain (they) have grown."

More recently, members of local ranch families spoke in church of their stewardship in terms of developing land management practices that are practical, cost efficient, and good for the environment. When they get together, they talk about sustainability, carbon sinks, natural capital, energy efficiency, and how to protect and save water resources.

Land measured by global positioning and tilled by computer-equipped machinery, livestock records kept so animals can be traced from birth to consumer, and dealing responsibly with genetic modifications are reminders that those who work the land need to find a balance between modern technological understandings and traditional wisdom.

All of this is seen in the context of the Abiding Presence of a benevolent God who walks with us through the storms, the grasshoppers and the ridiculous scourges of the market place.

Rogation Services need to mindfully encompass all who enjoy working with the soil, planting seeds and watching the mysteries of life unfold. Together we celebrate the gifts of land and community. We give thanks for the One who showed us how to see the Sacred Story unfold through the growth of the mustard seed. We feel affirmed that we do these things in partnership with the Creator.

(by Written by Joyce Sasse)