

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the” Matthew 9:36-38 NLT

## lectio // Matthew 9:35-38

Matthew tells us that Jesus went from town to town, visiting and speaking in local synagogues, or smaller gatherings where folks could pray and hear the reading of God's law, the prophets and the psalms. Jesus saw people, LOTS of people. People living their lives the best way they knew how. He saw the crowds as confused and helpless. Interesting choice of words Matt. They were troubled - skulló: to skin, a word used for skinning an animal alive! And they were dispersed - rhiptó: to throw, cast off. Sorry New Living Translation, but confused hardly compares with skinned alive. Everyone had this in common, they were under duress and feeling quite abandoned. And Jesus chooses to tell his followers, “that my friends, is a bumper crop staring right at us.” It's a HUGE harvest. What's so great about a massive amount of people alone and suffering? The gospel is GOOD NEWS not more bad news. The gospel is FREEDOM not more enslavement. The gospel is COMMUNITY and MISSION, HOPES and DREAMS, not political promises if elected. The gospel is LIFE, expansive lid-lifting, joy and peace. It's what people need when everything has gone wrong! Jesus saw hope in the harvest among the sea of depression. Ah, but where's the folks to gather the crop? Oh, there's not enough disciples, followers, residents in the Kingdom of God. Pray there's more. Pray there's enough. Look around today and see if you and I don't see what Jesus sees. Do we see people ALONE and ABANDONED? Then, Jesus would say, “there's a harvest.” He would also say, again, where are the helpers? A harvest not reaped is a harvest that rots!

## oratio

Father,

I'd ask to see what Jesus sees, what you see in our current global post-pandemic - a extremely LARGE group of people who feel alone and abandoned, like they are being skinned alive with pressures in ever part of our culture and society. However, that's just part of the problem, right? Seeing the large bumper crop and rallying the helpers to go out to harvest it and bring it in is a whole other matter. Who among us is healthy? Who among us is not full of despondent fear and gripping isolation. We need healthy helpers to see and work the abundance of what is happening right around us. I pray for workers, helpers who are healthy and ready to bring in the great harvest we all see.

## contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root