2013

Jesus said in a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold."

— Luke 8:4-8

When you grow food, you must be willing to let things get out of hand. The first year I prepared the soil a year in advance. I carefully layered ten rows of compost, grass clippings, leaves, soil and shredded newspaper and let it decompose over the winter. When spring arrived I planted kale, chard and broccoli, many tomato plants, two rows of squash, zucchini and pie pumpkins, and lots of lettuce, spinach, radishes and beets. And while the broccoli didn't produce much, the garden went wild and produced a hundredfold. I didn't expect such abundance and quickly learned that nothing makes friends faster than having too much food on your hands.

The next year I downsized, planted fewer rows, rotated my crops and still had too much food for our family of two. There were many "volunteers" in our garden, with garlic and tomato vines popping up where we did not sow. It was unexpected abundance again, and helping to feed the neighbors next door and visitors to the parish food pantry became a holy habit.

Seed sowing is always an act of faith, but when there is good soil and receptivity to the yield, the results are always more than we can handle alone. And, of course, we are not meant to—the yield, the growth, the food is for sharing.

— Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows