

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

ONE OF THE great laments of the psalms is, “O Lord, why do the wicked prosper?” All people – like children at play – have an instinctive desire for justice. And when we see injustice or wickedness seemingly rewarded by prosperity, we begin to question God’s oversight of the world.

In response to this concern, there are two good reflections in today’s Gospel parable of the weeds and the wheat. First, we may not understand why somebody sows weeds among the wheat, but we do experience the reality of the two growing together. Thus, the parable invites us to trust that God’s justice, despite what we see, will ultimately be exercised. Meanwhile, there is something important about the wheat

– good people – accepting the presence of the weeds and continuing to be faithful to being good despite the weeds.

Then, a second thought arises. Do we not all have within us both wheat and weeds? Why do they grow together within us? And what will happen to our weeds? Such a thought, I would hope, should help us not to judge others whom we easily demonize as “weeds,” while overlooking our own faults. Perhaps we also need to accommodate ourselves, without giving in, to our own weeds. For the concluding phrase of the first reading gives us God’s answer, filled with hope: “...because you [God] give repentance for sins.”

*Fr. Mark Miller, C.Ss.R.
Toronto, ON*

SUNDAY JULY 19

Roman Missal p. 452; Sunday Lectionary p. 485

Entrance Antiphon (*Psalm 53.6, 8*)

See, I have God for my help. The Lord sustains my soul. I will sacrifice to you with willing heart, and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good.

Introductory Rites (*p. 5*)

Collect

Show favour, O Lord, to your servants and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace, that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity, they may be ever watchful in keeping your commands. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading (*Wisdom 12.13, 16-19*)

There is no god besides you, Lord,
whose care is for all people,
to whom you should prove that you have not judged unjustly.

For your strength is the source of righteousness,
and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all.
For you show your strength
when people doubt the completeness of your power,
and you rebuke any insolence among those who know it.
Although you are sovereign in strength,
you judge with mildness,
and with great forbearance you govern us;
for you have power to act whenever you choose.

Through such works you have taught your people
that the righteous must be kind,
and you have filled your children with good hope,
because you give repentance for sins.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 86) —————



R. **Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

You, O Lord, are good and for-**giving**,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call · **on** you.

Give ear, O Lord, to my · **prayer**;
listen to my cry of · **suppli**-cation. **R.**

All the nations you have made shall come and bow down
before you, O · **Lord**,

and shall glorify · **your** name.
For you are great and do wondrous · **things**;
you alone · **are** God. **R.**

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and · **gracious**,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love · **and** faithfulness.

Turn to me and be · **gracious_to_me**.
Give your strength to · **your** servant. **R.**

©2010 Gordon Johnston/Novalis

Second Reading (Romans 8.26-27) —————

Brothers and sisters: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (See Matthew 11.25)

Alleluia. Alleluia. Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.
Alleluia.

Gospel (Matthew 13.24-43) —————

The shorter reading ends at the asterisks.

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus put before the crowds a parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.

“So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the

reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”

Jesus put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

* * *

Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the Prophet: “I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.”

Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are Angels.

“Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his Angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

SUNDAY JULY 19

Profession of Faith (p. 8)

Prayer of the Faithful

The following intentions are suggestions only. There are more suggestions at www.livingwithchrist.ca

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church, striving to live in openness to God's word revealed in our day, we pray to the Lord: R.

For the wisdom that inspires governments to support the weakest members of society, we pray to the Lord: R.

For busy people seeking stillness in order to listen to God in their own hearts, we pray to the Lord: R.

For this Christian community, called to put God's words of love into action every day, we pray to the Lord: R.

Preparation of the Gifts (p. 10)

Prayer over the Offerings

O God, who in the one perfect sacrifice brought to completion varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful servants and make it holy, as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honour of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Preface (Sundays in Ordinary Time, p. 11)

Communion Antiphon (*Psalm 110.4-5*)

The Lord, the gracious, the merciful, has made a memorial of his wonders; he gives food to those who fear him.

or

(Revelation 3.20)

Behold, I stand at the door and knock, says the Lord. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door to me, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me.

Prayer after Communion

Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing and Dismissal (p. 28)