

Link to Liturgy



The Wheat and the Weeds 16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lessons and Discussions

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“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed”

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Entrance Antiphon – Simple English Propers

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

Ecce Deus adiuvat me

Ps 54 (53): 6, 7

v

Behold, God is my helper, * and the Lord is the
upholder of my soul; turn back all the e-vil against my
e-nemies, destroy them in your fidel-i-ty, O Lord, the
Protector of my life.

Source: <http://www.ccwatershed.org/>

Alternate options:Hymns

All Hail, Adored Trinity
All People That on Earth Do Dwell
Holy God, We Praise Thy Name
Holy, Holy, Holy
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
Sing Praise to Our Creator
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

Collect – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Show favor, O Lord, to your servants
and mercifully increase the gifts of your grace,
that, made fervent in hope, faith and charity,

- [20] Catechism of the Catholic Church, Glossary pg. 2245
 [21] CCC 1749
 [22] cf. CCC 404
 [23] Sermo 73, 4: PL 54, 396
 [24] St. Thomas Aquinas, STh III, 1, 3, ad 3; cf. Rom 5:20
 [25] CCC 312
 [26] CCC 312
 [27] CCC 314
 [28] Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor, 52
 [29] pgs. 106-107 The Navarre Bible Commentary
 [30] lib. 19 Moral. c. 11.
 [31] Cornelius a Lapide, The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide Gospel of St. Matthew pg. 141
 [32] Augustine, *Serm. 33 de Sanc.*
 [33] The Church's Year pg. 101
 [34] Pope Francis; Homily January 30, 2014
 [35] Abbot Aueranger, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*, Book 4
 [36] NAB footnotes pg. 3644

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.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 Amen

Gospel Reading – Matthew 13:24-43 – Roman Missal

NOTE: *In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is read on the Fifth (Mt. 13:24-30) and Sixth (Mt. 13:31-35 Sunday after Epiphany*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
 - Glory to you O Lord

Jesus proposed another parable to the crowds, saying: “The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder came to him and said, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ His slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ He replied, ‘No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, “First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.”

He proposed another parable to them. “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the ‘birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.”

He spoke to them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened.”

All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He spoke to them only in parables, to fulfill what had been said through the prophet: *I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation of the world.*

Then, dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. His disciples approached him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” He said in reply, “He who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Just as 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 who cause others to sin and all evildoers. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From Saint Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to the church at Magnesia on the Meander, a church blessed with the grace of God the Father in Christ Jesus, our Savior, in whom I salute you. I send you every good wish in God the Father and in Jesus Christ.

I was delighted to hear of your love of God, so well-ordered and devout, and so I decided to address you in the faith of Jesus Christ. Honored as I am with a name of the greatest splendor, though I am still in chains I sing with the praises of the churches, and pray that they be united with the flesh and the spirit of Jesus Christ, who is our eternal life; a union in faith and love, to which nothing must be preferred; and above all a union with Jesus and the Father, for if in him we endure all the power of the prince of this world, and escape unharmed, we shall make our way to God.

I have had the honor of seeing you in the person of Damas your bishop, a man of God, and in the persons of your worthy presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius, and my fellow-servant, the deacon Zotion; may I continue to take delight in him for he is obedient to the bishop as to the grace of God, and to the presbyters as to the law of Jesus Christ.

habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante, praeparasti, da, ut cuius commemoratione laetamur; eius pia intercessione, ab instantibus malis et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Slave Regina (English Translation)

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee to we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, Who by the working of the Holy Spirit didst prepare both body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother, Mary, that she might deserve to be made a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, grant that we who rejoice in her memory, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from present evils and from lasting death, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

“The End” Notes

[1] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 28.1

[2] cf. St. John Chrysostom, Homilies on St. Matthew, 47; St. Augustine, in Catena Aurea

[3] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 28.1

[4] The Church’s Year pg. 98

[5] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 824

[6] Pope Paul VI, CPG 19.

[7] Abbot Aueranger, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*, Book 4

[8] Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D., *Divine Intimacy*, Volume II

[9] CCC 827

[10] The Church’s Year pg. 98

[11] pg. 106 The Navarre Bible Commentary

[12] Abbot Aueranger, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*, Book 4

[13] St. Josemaria Escriva, *Christ Is Passing By*, 123

[14] Information about heresies taken from Warren Carrol’s *2000 Years of Christianity* and Fr. John Hardon’s *Modern Catholic Dictionary*.

[15] Warren H. Carroll, *2000 Years of Christianity*

[16] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 28.2

[17] Pope Francis, Papal Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 40-41

[18] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 28.2

[19] Abbot Aueranger, O.S.B., *The Liturgical Year*, Book 4

Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina

V
S

Alve Re-gí-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ, Vi-ta, dul-
cé-do, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamámus, éxsu-
les, fí-li- i Hevæ. Ad te suspi-rá-mus, geméntes et flen-
tes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advo-cá-ta
nostra, illos tu- os mi-se-ri-córdes ó-cu-los ad nos con-
vér-te. Et Je-sum, be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu- i,
no-bis post hoc exsí-li- um osténde. O cle- mens:
O pi- a: O dulcis Virgo Ma-rí- a.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus. Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui gloriosae Virginis Matris Mariae corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui

Now it hardly becomes you to presume on your bishop's youth, but rather, having regard to the power of God the Father, to show him every mark of respect. This, I understand, is what your holy presbyters do, not taking advantage of his youthful condition but deferring to him with the prudence which comes from God, or rather not to him but to the Father of Jesus Christ, to the bishop of all. So then, for the honor of him who loves us, it is proper to obey without hypocrisy; for a man does not so much deceive the bishop he can see as try to deceive the bishop he cannot see. In such a case he has to reckon not with a man, but with God who knows the secrets of the heart.

We should then really live as Christians and not merely have the name; for many invoke the bishop's name but do everything apart from him. Such men, I think, do not have a good conscience, for they do not assemble lawfully as commanded.

All things have an end, and two things, life and death, are side by side set before us, and each man will go *to his own place*. Just as there are two coinages, one of God and the other of the world, each with its own image, so unbelievers bear the image of this world, and those who have faith with love bear the image of God the Father through Jesus Christ. Unless we are ready through his power to die in the likeness of his passion, his life is not in us.

Responsory – Office of Readings – 16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Be an example for all believers in speech and conduct, in love, faith and purity.

– In this way you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Ponder these duties and attend to them, so that all may see your progress.

– In this way you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

The Wheat and the Weeds – Lesson and Discussion

“The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field.”

What is the meaning behind the weed in this parable? The weed that is sown in the parable is called cockle. This plant is often found in cereal crops in the Middle East. “It resembles wheat so closely that even to the farmer’s practiced eye it is impossible to tell the two plants apart until the stalks begin to mature, at which stage the cockle can be recognized by its slender ear and emaciated grain; it is quite toxic to humans, and if mixed with flour will ruin bread.”[1] During the time of Jesus, a person would sabotage other person’s crops by purposely sowing cockle to ruin a person’s harvest.

The metaphorical meaning behind this passage as taught by the Fathers of the Church is the sowing of cockle is like the spreading of false doctrine[2].

Has this metaphor lost any of its’ meaning? One only has to take a look around the modern world for just a minute to realize that this parable has lost none of its’ meaning. It is still relevant even to this day. “There is practically no truth of the Catholic Faith which hasn’t been called into question.”[3] In the parable it seems that alongside every wheat, there also lies the cockle, and so it is in the world, where alongside every truth, there also lies a falsehood, a heresy. The proximity of the wheat to the cockle and the cockle to the wheat can be a blessing. There are many people that in their search for falsehood arrive at the truth that is growing right beside. People who have converted to the Catholic faith have shared that it was in trying to disprove the truth, that they found the truth.

Who sows the good seed? “The good seed is sown by Jesus, the Son of Man not only directly, but through His apostles, and the priests, their successors; the evil seed is sown by the devil, or by wicked men whom he uses as his tools.”[4]

How does this parable represent us individually? How does it represent the Church? Parables typically speak of Jesus’ Kingdom, and this parable is no exception. The world is full of both wheat and weeds and because the Church is in the world it is not excused from this fact. The day Jesus comes back again is the Day of Judgment. He will come to “harvest” and separate

in perfect liberty.
Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Oratory: Place of Prayer – Prayer for Priests

The prayer for priest can be found on page 29 of the Oratory: Place of Prayer Book. To purchase the Oratory: Place of Prayer Book - <http://remnantband.bandcamp.com/merch>

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

O Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep all Thy priests within the shelter of Thy Sacred Heart where none may harm them. Keep unstained their anointed hands which daily touch Thy Sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips purpled with Thy Precious Blood. Keep pure and unearthly their hearts sealed with the sublime marks of Thy glorious priesthood. Let Thy holy love surround them and shield them from the world's contagion. Bless their labors with abundant fruit, and may the souls to whom they have ministered be here below their joy and consolation and in Heaven their beautiful and everlasting crown. O Mary, Queen of the clergy, pray for us; obtain for us many holy priests. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Why does Jesus speak about birds nestling in its branches?

Jesus is referencing the prophet Ezekiel who says, “On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it. It shall put forth branches and bear fruit, and become a majestic cedar. Every small bird will nest under it, all kinds of winged birds will dwell in the shade of its branches.” (Ezekiel 17:23) and again “In its braches nested all the birds of the sky; Under its boughs all the wild animals gave birth, And in its shade dwelt all the mighty nations.” (Ezekiel 31:6) The birds nesting in the tree represent the people of Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom during Ezekiel’s time. Jesus is again showing how he comes to fulfill every prophecy told that God would do for His people through the Messiah. The birds can also be seen as the souls not just of Ezekiel’s time, but also of all time. “The birds that come and dwell upon it, are, as the holy fathers interpret it, the souls of men aspiring to the eternal goods of the better world. If we are worthy of our name of Christians, we shall love this tree, and find our rest and safety nowhere but beneath its shade.”[35] Jesus calls all souls who labor and are burdened to come to Him and find rest. (Cf. Matthew 11:28-30)

Why are these parables (mustard seed and the wheat and the weeds) lumped together?

“The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast illustrate the same point: the amazing contrast between the small beginnings of the kingdom and its marvelous expansion.”[36]

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Prayer to Saint Joseph, patron of the Universal Church

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

O most powerful patriarch, Saint Joseph, patron of that universal Church which has always invoked thee in anxieties and tribulations; from the lofty seat of thy glory lovingly regard the Catholic world. Let it move thy paternal heart to see the mystical spouse of Christ and His vicar weakened by sorrow and persecuted by powerful enemies. We beseech thee, by the most bitter suffering thou didst experience on earth, to wipe away in mercy the tears of the revered pontiff, to defend and liberate him, and to intercede with the Giver of peace and charity, that every hostile power being overcome and every error being destroyed, the whole Church may serve the God of all blessings

the wheat from the weeds - the good souls and those who had done evil.

Jesus explains this parable a little later in Matthew’s Gospel 13:36-43. His explanation helps us to better understand and defend the Church when people ask how the Church can be holy if there are sinners in it. The Church is holy because it was not made by man, but by God. The Church is the Body of Christ and a body is made up of two primary parts, a head and members. In the Body of Christ the Church, Christ the head, is holy. The faithful who are the members of this Body are unholy. The head of the Body is perfect while the members are imperfect. The unholiness and imperfection of the members is not however a permanent state for the pilgrim Church. “United with Christ, the Church is sanctified by him; through him and with him she becomes sanctified. ‘All the activities of the Church are directed, as toward their end, to the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God.’”[5] Members of the Body of Christ will be made holy and will give glory to God. The Church Militant (earth) and the Church Suffering (purgatory) is being made holy in the midst of unholy and does not at all times give glory to God. When the Pilgrim Church arrives at her destination it will be holy and it will give glory, all members will be what the head is already. The two, both head and members, will be one.

Is it possible for weeds to become wheat? God allows saints and sinners to dwell among each other because sinners need salvation, as do saints. In fact, with God’s grace and a converted heart, a person who has sinned can be reconciled with God and become good wheat. “The Church is therefore holy, though having sinners in her midst, because she herself has no other life but the life of grace. If they live her life, her members are sanctified; if they move away from her life, they fall into sins and disorders that prevent the radiation of her sanctity. This is why she suffers and does penance for those offenses, of which she has the power to free her children through the blood of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit.”[6] The reality of this parable is that weeds can convert and become wheat, but let us not forget that wheat can become weeds. If there was no chance of wheat falling and becoming a weed, then Satan would not bother to tempt us and Saint Paul would not say, “work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12)

MOVIE – Mission Impossible 2 (Nyah Injects) – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 5:31

http://youtu.be/vDkzwKj4_NI

Watch Video up to 3:50. People change. In the clip Ethan reminds Nyah that she had told him that she had no conscience. Nyah was a thief; she was sexual promiscuous and she lied. Even in her habits of sin, she practices heroic virtue at the end of the movie as she is faced with good and evil and chooses to sacrifice her life to preserve the good. In this clip the bad guy is trying to get the injection gun, which has a deadly virus in it. If she gives him the gun she might save her life but put many other lives in jeopardy. By injecting the virus she ensures that it will not spread, but instead it will kill her and die with her in 20 hours.

It can be at times difficult to understand why God would place good and bad side by side. We can remember that nothing happens unless God wills it or unless God allows it. God wills good. God allows evil. "First of all, the mixture of good and bad is an advantage; it teaches the good not to put their hopes in man, but in God. Then, too, the mercy of our Lord is so great, that at times the very cockle is converted, by diving grace into wheat." [7] The effect the weeds and wheat have upon each other is mysterious and known to God alone for it is He that is building up His kingdom. "In this world, the kingdom of heaven is in a state of development, of growth, and therefore there is not a clear distinction between the good and the bad; God does not want that; in fact, he allows them to live side by side with each other, both to test the former and strengthen them in virtue, and to give the latter time for conversion. Also there cannot be excluded the possibility that at some point the good seed can degenerate into weeds. Just as in this life no one is definitively a son of the devil, because one can always withdraw from sin, so it is also true that no one is definitively a son of the kingdom, because unfortunately one can be perverted." [8]

This parable as do most has a way of allowing each person to place themselves personally into them. We understand that the wheat and weeds can be like people, but which one are we? A more appropriate way of looking at it is what good seed have I allowed God to sow in my heart? How have I allowed the devil to sow bad seed in my heart? How am I going to get rid of the weeds on my soul? We must acknowledge the times we have sinned and allowed the evil one to plant seed in our heart. We can have Christ burn the weeds in the great sacrament of Reconciliation. "The Church, however, clasping sinners to her bosom, at once holy and always in need of purification, follows

own heroic witness of virtue continue to perpetuate the growth of the Church

Why is the Church compared to a grain of mustard-seed?

"Because there is a great similarity between them. The mustard-seed, though so small, grows in Palestine so high and so rapidly, that it becomes a broad tree, in which birds can build their nests. In like manner the Church of Christ was in the beginning very small like the mustard-seed, but it soon spread so wide that numberless people, even great philosophers and princes, came to find peace and protection under its branches." [33]

Christ and the Church are one. There is only one Body, the Body of Christ, the Church. The tree is both Christ and the Church. "It is an absurd dichotomy to love Christ without the Church; to listen to Christ but not the Church; to be with Christ at the margins of the Church. One cannot do this. It is an absurd dichotomy," [34]

VIDEO – Pope Francis Sends Video Message to Kenneth Copeland - Lets Unite – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 45:56

<http://youtu.be/uA4EPOfic5A>

In this historic video (for just the video view from 31:42 to 38:42) Pope Francis speaks to Kenneth Copeland about fraternal unity and charity. He gives reference to the brothers of Joseph in the Old Testament. Joseph's brothers were hungry and thus they came with their money to Egypt to find food. In Egypt they found more than food, they found their brother. Many of the faithful who are at the margins of the Church have money yet they still hunger. May their hunger lead them to the fullness of truth in the Body of Christ the Church. May they find in the Church not only food but also a brother. Pope Francis speaks from the heart and speaks as a brother. May those whose watch this video see Pope Francis first as brother and then come to know him as a Holy Father.

CHANT – Simple English Propers – Psalm 84 – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:52

http://youtu.be/O5_RbCfjOZs

In this chant we sing a song about the Church in a twofold sense: she is the house of God (Psalm 84) and the congregation of the faithful (Psalm 86). It is Jesus Christ the Vine that is the tree that all of the faithful find shelter, refuge and nourishment.

owned. The same day, the Prefect of Rome demanded Lawrence to bring the Church's treasure to him thinking the Church had some wealth hidden away. Lawrence came to the Prefect three days later with all the poor and sick people he was able to gather who were supported by the Church. St. Lawrence said, "This is the Church's treasure!" The Prefect was so angry by this he demanded for a slow and painful death of Lawrence. The Saint was tied on top of an iron grill over a slow fire that roasted his flesh little by little. Saint Lawrence, full of ecstasy (wrapped up in God's love), hardly felt the pain of the flames. At one point he said mockingly, "Turn me over I'm done on this side!" Just before he died he said, "It's cooked enough now." He then began to pray for the city of Rome and this it might convert to Jesus and the Catholic Church might be able to spread throughout the whole world. He is the patron of chefs, against fires, comedians, cooks, poor people, school children, deacons, seminarians, stained glass workers, and other things. St. Lawrence's feast day is August 10th. Connecting Saint Lawrence's life and the parable of the mustard seed, St. Augustine wrote, "We may compare the holy martyr Laurence to a grain of mustard seed; for he, being bruised by various sufferings, deserved to become fragrant throughout the whole world by the grace of his martyrdom. He, when he was in the body, was humble, unknown, and held in low estimation; but after he had been bruised, torn, and burnt he diffused the odour of his nobleness in the churches in all the world. Rightly, therefore, is the comparison applied to him. For Laurence, when he suffers, is inflamed. The fervour of its attrition moves the one; Laurence breathes forth fire in his manifold tribulations. Mustard, I say, is cooked in a small vessel; Laurence is roasted on the gridiron by the fiery flame. Blessed Laurence the martyr was burnt outwardly by the flames of the raging tyrant, but he was inflamed inwardly by the far greater fire of the love of Christ." [32]

The First Reading on this Sunday's readings is from Wisdom, which says, "You show your strength when men doubt the completeness of your power, and you rebuke any insolence among those who know it." (Wisdom 12:17) Jesus is telling us through this parable that God shows us His strength even in such a small seed. Many will mock and rebuke God because they do not see the fullness or completeness of God's amazing power. However, in just a short span of time He shows how the leadership of just twelve men can turn a small seed into the world's largest and only true religion. God continues to show his great power in his saints like Saint Lawrence, who through their

constantly the path of penance and renewal.' All members of the Church, including her ministers, must acknowledge that they are sinners. In everyone, the weeds of sin will still be mixed with the good wheat of the Gospel until the end of time. Hence the Church gathers sinners already caught up in Christ's salvation but still on the way to holiness" [9]

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - Path of Perfection]

Why does God allow the wheat and weeds to exist side by side? "Because of His patience and long suffering towards the sinner to whom He gives time for repentance, and because of His love for the just from whom He would not, by weeding out the unjust, take away the occasion of practicing virtue and gathering up merits for themselves; for because of the unjust, the just have numerous opportunities of exercise patience, humility, etc." [10] It has been said that we should thank the person who most annoys us, or the enemy that most ridicules us, because it is that person that sanctifies us if we choose virtue, instead of vice in dealing with them. "The end of this parable gives a symbolic explanation of why God allows evil to have its way for a time-and for its ultimate extirpation. Evil is to run its course on earth until the end of time; therefore, we should not be scandalized by the presence of evil in the world. It will be obliterated not in this life, but after death; at the Judgment (the harvest) the good will go to heaven and the bad to hell." [11]

It takes time for the cockle to be distinguished from the wheat. This is true of both individuals as well as heresy. Take for example a person that calls themselves a follower of Christ, but in due time, it is evident that they are no follower of Christ, but rather a follower of their own will. Time is the test of all things and Saint Paul advises us to, "Test everything, retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:21) Just as the liar is usually caught in his lie, the heretic is caught in his web of lies and destruction.

Heresy by the Century (First to Tenth) – Lesson and Discussion

"his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat"

This lesson is part I of II, please also read "Heresy by the Century (Eleventh to Twenty First)"

What is heresy? “In the Roman Catholic Church, heresy has a very specific meaning. Anyone who, after receiving baptism, while remaining nominally a Christian, pertinaciously denies or doubts any of the truths that must be believed with divine and Catholic faith is considered a heretic. Accordingly four elements must be verified to constitute formal heresy; previous valid baptism, which need not have been in the Catholic Church; external profession of still being a Christian, otherwise the person becomes an apostate; outright denial or positive doubt regarding a truth that the Catholic Church has actually proposed as revealed by God; and the disbelief must be morally culpable, where a nominal Christian refuses to accept what he knows is an doctrinal imperative.” A heretic therefore is resolved in their position; they are not merely wrestling to understand but rather are permanent in their denial or doubt. A heretic has to know what they are rejecting, in others words you can accidentally be a heretic. It is the obligation of every Catholic to live what they believe and to accomplish that call; every Catholic must know what they believe.

This lesson briefly outlines the major heresies, as well as religions or beliefs that have budded from heresies over the last two thousand years. Many of these heresies are gone, others have disappeared only to reappear in another guise, while some will be with us until the last day when they and all falsehood will be separated from will be separated and burned as the weeds are in relation to the wheat. “Heresies, then, like weeds in a field, may spring up in the Church; but the day must come when they will be uprooted; some of them will wither on the parent stems, but the whole cockle shall be gathered into bundles to burn. Where are now the heresies that sprang up in the first ages of the Church? And in another hundred years, what will have become of the heresy, which, under the pretentious name of ‘the reformation,’ has caused incalculable evil? It is the same with the scandals which rise up with the pale of the Church: they are a hard trial; but trials must come.”[12]

What are some of the biggest false doctrines? Any seed sown by the evil one grows into false doctrines. “We Christians should have been on guard to make sure that the good things placed in this world by the Creator were developed in the service of truth and good. But we have fallen asleep—a sad thing, that sluggishness of our heart! While the enemy and all those who serve him worked incessantly. You can see how the weeds have grown abundantly everywhere.”[13] There are so many false

latitude and in all ages, is forever developing in spite of obstacles, thanks to God’s promise and aid.”[29]

VIDEO – The Mustard Tree – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:22

http://youtu.be/DSB_At4H8kA

Most people may have never even seen a mustard seed or a tree fully grown. The video shows the smallest of mustard seeds and how large it can grow.

How is Christ like the mustard seed? Jesus is the catalyst, the start of the Church. From the blood of the cross began the very roots that will take hold with the apostles and their disciples who would share in the same fate as Christ. St. Gregory expounds this whole parable, “Christ Himself is the grain of mustard seed, who was planted in the sepulcher of the garden, and rose again a mighty tree. He was but a grain when He died; a tree when He rose again. A grain through lowliness of the flesh; a tree by the power of His majesty. A grain, because we saw Him, and there was no comeliness; but a tree because He was fairer than the children of men. The branches of this tree are sacred preachers. And let us see how widely they are spread. For what is spoken concerning them? Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. The birds rest in their branches, because holy souls who lift up themselves from earthly thoughts by the wings, as it were, of virtues are refreshed after the fatigue of this life by their words and their consolations.” [30]

How can Christ be the King and the Kingdom? Christ is both. “It is replied: as a king is as it were the head in a kingdom, so a kingdom is as the body of a king. Wherefore a king represents the whole state or kingdom. Hence according to the rule of Ticonius, often in Scripture what belongs to the Church, which is the kingdom of Christ, is attributed to Christ, and vice versa.”[31]

Story of Saint Lawrence of Rome 225-258

Saint Lawrence was one of the seven deacons in Rome, and was charged to help the poor. He worked under Pope Saint Sixtus. When the emperor of Rome called for the execution of Pope St. Sixtus, Lawrence followed him crying out, “Father, where are you going without your deacon?” The Pope replied, “I am not leaving you, my son, in three days you will follow me.” Lawrence at once gave all he had to the poor and sold off everything he

not mean we follow in God's actions or goodness and righteousness.

"We firmly believe that God is master of the world and of its history. But the ways of his providence are often unknown to us. Only at the end, when our partial knowledge ceases, when we see God 'face to face,' will we fully know the ways by which even through the dramas of evil and sin – God has guided his creation to that definitive Sabbath rest for which he created heaven and earth." [27]

What is the opposite of evil? The opposite of evil is charity. We must remember that evil has a limit, a breaking point. Goodness and charity however are boundless because God is limitless. Many people see for example the 10 commandments as negatives; "thou shall not this" and "thou shall not that". What we must remember to ask is why? Why is it in a "not". For example the fifth commandment is thou shall not kill. This is telling us *not* to commit a negative. Killing someone takes a human life. However, this is the point of no return because once a person is killed you cannot bring them back. Death is bad in the sense that death entered into the world by Original Sin and Satan. We cannot undo a killing. However, the opposite of death is life. Life is good because God creates it. We are called not to kill yes, but the commandment is about giving honor and respect to the dignity of all human life. We can never do enough to show this dignity. There is no limit to showing peace, love, patience, kindness, and gentleness to another person. This is beauty of God! Where there is an end point to a negative or evil there is no end to the good, charity, and God. "The reason is this: the commandment of love of God and neighbor does not have in its dynamic any higher limit, but it does have a lower limit, beneath which the commandment is broken." [28]

Mustard Seed – Lesson and Discussion

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed"

What does the meaning behind the parable of the Mustard Seed? "Here, the man is Jesus Christ and the field, the world. The grain of mustard seed is the preaching of the Gospel and the Church, which from very small beginnings will spread throughout the world. The parable clearly refers to the universal scope and spread of the Kingdom of God: the Church, which embraces all mankind of every kind and condition, in every

doctrines in the 2,000-year history of the Church. The biggest false doctrines of today could arguably be secularism, materialism, and relativism.

Heresy by the Century[14]

First Century

Judaziers – Early Jewish Christians who considered the Mosaic Law still binding. Observance of the Sabbath instead of Sunday, circumcision, and keeping the severe dietary laws were the principal customs they wanted to keep.

Gnosticism – The theory of salvation by knowledge. Matter was said to be hostile to spirit, and the universe was held to be a depravation of the Deity. Gnosticism is the invariable element in every major Christian heresy; by its denial of an objective revelation that was completed in the apostolic age and its disclaimer that Christ established in the Church a teaching authority to interpret decisively the meaning of the revealed word of God.

Third Century

Montanism – Monatists taught that the Holy Spirit was now supplementing the revelation of Christ, with consequent displacement of the bishops and even the Pope. Its members considered themselves specially gifts by the Holy Spirit as prophets of Christ's second coming. This heresy won over the great Tertullian.

Monarchianism – A denial of the Trinity of Persons. It was a belief in modalism that taught that God acts in three modes. The modalist type admitted only a distinction of functions in God, who as Father created the world, as Son redeemed, and as the Holy Spirit sanctified the world.

Manichaeism – In the Manichaean system there are two ultimate sources of creation, the one good and the other evil. God is the creator of all that is good, and Satan of all that is evil. Man's spirit is from God; his body is from the devil. The body and matter are bad, the spirit is good and there is a constant battle between the two.

Fourth Century

Arianism – This heresy claimed that the Son, Jesus, was less than and a creature of the Father. Arians denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. There was a time when Jesus did not exist and He is the Son of God by grace and adoption. He is not of the same substance of the Father.

Donatism – This heresy claimed that the validity of the sacraments depends on the moral character of the minister; also that sinners cannot be members of the Church, nor can the true Church tolerate them if their sins are publicly known.

Pelagianism – Pelagius taught that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned. He also taught that Adam's fall injured only himself and at worst affected his posterity by giving them a bad example. Another belief was that newborn children are in the same condition as Adam before he fell and that mankind will not die because of Adam's sin or rise on the Last Day because of Christ's redemption. Finally, the law of ancient Israel no less than the Gospel offers equal opportunity to reach heaven. Ultimately Pelagianism denied the supernatural order and the necessity of grace for salvation.

Fifth Century

Monophysitism – This heresy claimed that in Christ there was only one nature. Christ's human nature was suppressed.

Nestorianism – The heresy taught that there were two distinct persons in the Incarnate Christ, one human and the other divine. Nestorius came to describe their union; he could not have them joined ontologically (in their being /substance) or hypostatically (constituting one person), but only morally or psychologically.

Seventh Century

Monothelitism – This heresy claimed that there was a kind of divine-human operation in Christ. They believe in the two natures of Christ but taught that these two natures had a common will and a common activity.

Islam – Monotheistic religion founded by Mohammed who was exposed to many of the heresies or strands of heresies listed

Christ and our redemption.”[25] All this being said, we should remember, “evil never becomes a good.”[26] Meaning it is never okay to commit evil to bring about a good.

Is evil as powerful as God? No. There have been many heresies; Manichaeism is one, throughout the Church's history challenging this fact. Some have believed in dualism, which is the teaching that good and evil are equal and battling it out to see who wins in a permanent conflict. There are others, Gnosticism is one, who have looked upon the physical world and seen it as evil and the product of the fall of Man. Both of these are incorrect. Whether we are talking about the evil one, Satan, or the evil actions of a human being, they are not as powerful as God. The only unforgivable sin is to doubt or deny the fact that we can be forgiven. If we positively state that we cannot be forgiven, we are saying that the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is not good enough. In other words we are saying that our sin is greater than His grace. Are we ready to make that claim?

How do we know that Satan and God are not equal in power?

Satan was created by God and thus subject under God. The same can be said for any person who does evil. They are still the subjects of God. They have their days of sowing and will also have the day of reaping or harvest. Jesus promises this in the Gospel Reading today. God has already won the victory. God is more powerful than any creature or any act a creature of His can make. As Saint Paul writes about God's power through Christ crucified is “the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (1 Cor. 1:24-25)

TV SHOW – Seinfeld George tries to get fired – POP

CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:41

<http://youtu.be/tUIHKKNH4HI>

George is offered a great job with the New York Mets, but he has to first get fired from his job with the New York Yankees. In the video we see what he attempts to do in attempts to get fired, and the aftermath of it.

Are people born evil? People are *not* born evil. God never creates anything that is evil. As state above, we are conceived with Original Sin and are wounded, but we are not inherently evil. All men are born in the image and likeness of God thus we are good, however, though we are made in God's image this does

Jesus Christ. Pope Saint Leo the Great says on this matter, “Christ’s inexpressible grace gave us blessings better than those the demon’s envy had taken away.”[23] St. Thomas Aquinas wrote, “There is nothing to prevent human nature’s being raised up to something greater, even after sin; God permits evil in order to draw forth some greater good. Thus St. Paul says, ‘Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more’; and the Exultet sings, ‘O happy fault,... which gained for us so great a Redeemer!’”[24]

MUSIC – Lord I Need You by Matt Maher fet. Audrey Assed – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:44

<http://youtu.be/iaVPupbNFAo>

In the song he sings, “Where sin runs deep, your grace is more”. He speaks to the heart of every human. We are all sinners, but God’s grace is stronger than any sin we can commit. We have to know that we do need Him all the more.

How can good come out of evil? There are countless examples of good coming out of evil. For example, in the Old Testament we read about Joseph being sold by his brothers to a slave trade. The brothers sell their own brother and then they lie to their father, saying that he was killed. Joseph would be sent to Egypt where he would eventually become a prince in Egypt. When a famine strikes Joseph’s family they come to Egypt where they unexpectedly reunite with their brother Joseph. They go to Egypt seeking food and they find a brother. Instead of striking out vengeance toward his brothers, Joseph showers them with mercy. Joseph says to his brothers, “It was not you who sent me here, but God...You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive.”(Gen. 45:8, 50; 50:20; cf. Tob. 2:12-18)Just because we may not see the good come out of some evil act does not mean there was some good that came out of it to someone or something somewhere at some point in time. Joseph is a type of Christ. Jesus Christ was betrayed by His own people. “He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him.” (John 1:11) Through the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, He is now seated at the right hand of the Father. May all of us who hunger and thirst approach the thrown of the One we once betrayed, that He might shower us with mercy. The greatest example we can share as Christians is the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. “From the greatest moral evil ever committed – the rejection and murder of God’s only Son, caused by the sins of all men – God, by his grace that ‘abounded all the more,’ brought the greatest of goods: the glorification of

above. Islam is not a heresy but rose out of the soil of the Eastern Church which was plagued with heresies, confusion and false doctrines. One could say that small heresies can mount up to a large religion.

Eighth Century

Iconoclasm – A heresy that rejected as superstition the use of religious images and advocated for their destruction. It was occasioned by the rise of Islam, which considers all sacred images idolatrous. Iconoclasm literally means image breakers.

Heresy by the Century (Eleventh to Twenty First) – Lesson and Discussion

“his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat”

This lesson is part II of II, please first read “Heresy by the Century (First to Tenth)”

Eleventh Century

Eastern Schism – Schism is a break but not a heresy. With a heresy there is doctrinal error involved. The churches of the west (the Roman Rite) and the churches of the east (various rites) were united under one common Papa (Pope) for over 1000 years. The Eastern Schism ended this unity and although no heresy was or is involved (both the east and west are still not united), the disunity allows the enemy to be more successful in sowing falsehood. If the eastern churches and the western churches were united the front against Satan’s would be more fortified.

Twelfth Century

Catharism / Albigensianism – A modified form of the Manichaeism heresy that flourished in Southern France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It claimed that a good deity created the world of the spirit, and an evil god the material world, including the human body, which is under its control. The good deity sent Jesus Christ, as a creature, to deliver human souls from their imprisonment. Albigensians favored suicide and advocated abstaining from marriage.

Thirteenth Century

Inquisition – “Heretics were criminals under civil and canon law.

While infidels were not forced to enter the Church nor punished for their unbelief, all baptized souls were held accountable for the purity of faith. The rapid growth of heresies in the thirteenth century provoked the Church to conduct investigations. Those who were found guilty were turned over to the state for punishment.”[15] There were many abuses on especially the state arm of the Inquisition, abuses that brought about the death of even Saint and holy men and women. Saint Joan of Arc who was tried and put to death by a branch of the Inquisition as well as Fr. Savanorola, a Dominican priest who was burned at the stake are examples of this abuse. Both were not heretics but were falsely accused of heresy.

Fifteenth Century

Humanism – Humanism is good in that it encourages the free use of the treasures of antiquity without compromising the truths of the Gospel. Christian humanism began with Dante (1265-1321), while pagan humanism reached its peak in Petrarch (1304-74). Popes Pius II, Sixtus IV, and Leo X favored Christian humanism and did much to promote it. St. Thomas More (1478-1535) typified its best spirit in England. After the French Revolution the extreme humanistic spirit rebelled against Christian revelation and the Church.

Nationalism – The phrase "Pro deo et patria" means for God and Country. Nationalism, which is similar to Absolutism, is a loyalty to Country before Church. As history has proven many countries determine how to love and serve God or promote the idea that the love of country is love of God. The better motto is “For God, Church and Country” in that order with the understanding that Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate and the Church are one so therefore God and Church are first, country is second.

For the following 500 years please also see
Video Lesson - 500 Years of Blindness

Sixteenth Century

Protestantism – There was much need of Church reform in the Sixteenth Century and every reason to protest, but not at the expense of rejecting truth. The Protestant revolt has led to a splintering of over 30,000 ecclesial communities or denominations. Each community and even with some

ultimate perfection in which God created the world, involving the existence of the less perfect alongside the more perfect, the constructive and the destructive forces of nature, the appearance and disappearance of certain beings. Moral evil, however, results from the free choice to sin which angels and men have; it is permitted by God, who knows how to derive good from it, in order to respect the freedom of his creatures. The entire revelation of God’s goodness in Christ is a response to the existence of evil.”[20]

VIDEO – The Problem of Evil – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 9:34

<http://youtu.be/kKpEUxgZR5Y>

The video is from the Catholicism Series. Fr. Barron speaks of the heart of the problem of evil.

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - What is Evil?]

Why did God create evil? We have to remember that evil is the lack or the absence of good. God did not create evil because everything God creates is good. The subject has the ability to move away from God thus creating a void between him and the ultimate good, God. “Freedom makes man a moral subject. When he acts deliberately, man is, so to speak, the father of his acts.”[21] God did not create evil, he only allows it to exist. If something exists, it exists either because God wills it or God allows it.

Why is there evil? Why does God allow evil to exist? There is no concrete answer to these questions because only God knows this answer, and He reveals His mysteries to us in the fullness of time. In other words we will understand the reason for certain evils when we need to know and if we are open to knowing. God has however shed enough light on this for us to give some truth and solace to understand why there is evil and why He allows it to exist.

There is evil because there is free will. God allows us to follow Him or walk away from Him. Our first parents, Adam and Eve had broken the harmony of perfect justice, peace, and holiness of all creation. By our parent’s fall we are deprived of original holiness, but we are not totally corrupted. We have a wounded by this sin.[22] Some may say why would God allow the effects of original sin, to exist and be passed down throughout the course of human history? The answer lies within God’s Son,

“We have to take advantage of the thousand and one opportunities we get in daily life to sow the good seed of Christ – when, for example, travelling, or reading a newspaper, or chatting with friends, or attending to our children’s education, or taking part in the activity of a professional association, or voting in an election. Many such opportunities will arise spontaneously, like life itself, and others we will create deliberately, with the help of grace and our native ability, all in the service of Christ: we are his voice in the world.”[18] If the evil one, his devils and his followers are working hard to sow weeds, we must work harder to sow wheat. We must uproot the weed show in our hearts and replace it with the wheat the Christ offers.

We must never lose hope, for Christ and His Church are victorious. “Our Lord here teaches us, under the symbolism of two parables, what we are to believe concerning His Church, which is His kingdom, a kingdom that rises indeed here on earth, but is to be perfected in heaven. What is this grain of mustard-seed, which is hidden under ground, is unseen by man’s eye, then appears as the least of herbs, but finally, becomes a tree? It is the Word of God, at first hidden in Judea, trampled on by man’s malice even so as to be buried in a tomb, but, at length, rising triumphantly and reaching rapidly to every part of the world. Scarcely had a hundred years elapsed since Jesus was put to death, when His Church was vigorous even far beyond the limits of the Roman Empire. During the past nineteen centuries, every possible effort has been made to uproot the tree of God; persecution, diplomacy, human wisdom, all has tried, and all have but wasted their time. True, they succeeded, from time to time, in severing a branch; but another grew in its place, for the sap of the tree is vigorous beyond measure.”[19]

Discussion Questions: Of all of these heresies, which one do you think is the most dangerous? Why is it difficult to engage in evangelization? Would it be easier to evangelize to strangers, friends, or family? Why? What is one way you could evangelize to a friend, stranger, or family?

Evil – Lesson and Discussion

“the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil.”

What is evil? “The opposite or absence of good. One form of evil, physical evil, is a result of the ‘state of journeying’ toward its

communities it is hard to nail down which truths of the Church are rejected and which are embraced. The Council of Trent in 1563 addressed the many falsehoods. The equal validity of Scripture and Apostolic Tradition was confirmed. The Sacraments were carefully defined and Protestant errors refuted.

Seventeenth Century

Absolutism - Government in civil society in which the authority is totally vested in the ruler. In the case of Church and State relations, the State trumps the Church in all matters. The Church has no authority and in many cases the State has enforced the Church to sign oaths and allegiance to the head of the State instead of the Holy Father.

Eighteenth Century

Naturalism - The view that the only reality that exists is nature, so that divine grace is either denied or ignored.

Freemasonry - The teachings and practices of a secret international organization whose modern origins date from the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Freemasonry began as a fraternity of Deists in Europe, and its basic orientation has been naturalistic, i.e., anti-supernatural, ever since. Its hostility to the Catholic Church has evoked numerous declarations of the Holy See, notably of Popes Clement XII (1738), Pius IX (1864) and Leo XIII (1884). The Code of Canon Law (1918) decreed that no Catholic may join "Masonic sects or any other similar associations which plot against the Church" (Canon 2335).

Nineteenth Century

Skepticism - The theory that the real truth of things cannot be known with certainty. Skepticism is the seed of Relativism. If truth cannot be known who am I to say that what I believe is true and that what you believe is not true. Truth is therefore not absolute but unknown. Saint Thomas Aquinas writes, “True itself, speaks truly or there’s nothing true.” Jesus Christ is Truth. Skepticism teaches that we cannot know with certainty that Christ is what He says He is, and if He is not truth, then nothing is true.

Twentieth Century

Secularism - Technically the philosophy of naturalism advocated since the nineteenth century, first in England and then elsewhere. It is a closed system that affirms that human existence and destiny are fully explainable in terms of this world without reference to eternity. On its social side, secularism promotes the advancement of humanity's lot in this life, and charges Christianity with indifference to poverty and suffering because of its alleged preoccupation with God and the life to come.

Relativism - In philosophy, the view that there is no absolute truth or certitude. It is claimed that truth depends entirely on variable factors such as person, place, time, and circumstances. Moral relativism holds that there are no unchangeable principles of human behavior, either because all truth is relative or because there are no inherently evil actions, since everything depends on other factors, such as customs, conventions, or social approval.

[see also Link to Liturgy Lesson - What is Evil?]

Atheism - Atheism is the denial of a personal God who is totally distinct from the world he created. Modern atheism has become so varied and widespread that the Second Vatican council identified no less than eight forms of disbelief under the single term *atheismus*: "Some people expressly deny the existence of God. Others maintain that man cannot make any assertion whatsoever about Him. Still others admit only such methods of investigation as would make it seem quite meaningless to ask questions about God. Many, trespassing beyond the boundaries of the positive sciences, either contend that everything can be explained by the reasoning process used in such sciences, or, on the contrary, hold that there is no such thing as absolute truth. With others it is their exaggerated idea of man that causes their faith to languish; they are more prone, it would seem, to affirm man than to deny God. Yet others have such a faulty notion of God that when they disown this product of the imagination their denial has no reference to the God of the Gospels. There are also those who never enquire about God; religion never seems to trouble or interest them at all, nor do they try to see why they should bother about it" (*Church in the Modern World*, I, 19). In the light of this array of infidelity, it was only logical for the Council to declare that atheism is one of the greatest problems facing mankind in the world today.

For more on heresy and it's history see the following Link to Liturgy Lessons

Lesson - full of Grace

Lesson - Two Fishing Stories

Video Lesson - Truth and Lies (Relativism)

We must remember that in order to have bad you must first have good. In order to have falsehood you must first have truth. Falsehood is a deprivation, perversion or absence of truth. The best way to dispel falsehood is to know the truth! "The prophet Hosea, on seeing the Chosen People far from the happiness to which they had been called, wrote: 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. (Hos. 4:6)' We too can see great masses of our fellow men steeped in sin and misery, distraught and totally confused because they are bereft of divine truth." [16] Where do we get our knowledge of Jesus from? Is it from the opinion of a pastor who is interpreting the scripture alone, without the aid of the Church? Is it from the History Channel or other forms of media that perpetuate the Arian heresy, highlighting the humanity of Christ and rejecting His divinity? Do we conform Jesus Christ to our life or do we believe in the Jesus Christ as presented by the Gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John? We should consult the teachings of the Church in all areas, rather than going with what we have been taught or what is popular belief. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is available to us and is a source of truth in a world of lies.

How do we fight this false doctrine? We can fight false doctrine by sowing good seed. We do this through evangelization. We are all called to evangelize! "Let us go forth, then, let us go forth to offer everyone the life of Jesus Christ. Here I repeat for the entire Church what I have often said to the priests and laity of Buenos Aires: I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the center and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures. If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life." [17]