

## “The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like...”

**T**he Gospel reading consists of parables, one of which Jesus explains. The two that seem easy to understand compare the kingdom with a mustard seed that begins small and then grows large enough to welcome all manner of birds for nesting, and of a bit of yeast that completely transforms the entire batch of dough. The parable about the weeds in the field of wheat needed explanation. Any farmer would have recognized the situation described. We don't always know where they come from, but weeds seem to crop up everywhere. What should one do? Lest wheat be inadvertently pulled up, let both wheat and weeds grow till the harvest. That is the time of separation.

So, what's the meaning of these parables? Like the mustard seed, the kingdom—the new way of living that Jesus came to inaugurate—consists of small acts of unselfishness and genuine love. But it grows and grows until it is opened to all manner of people. Like the

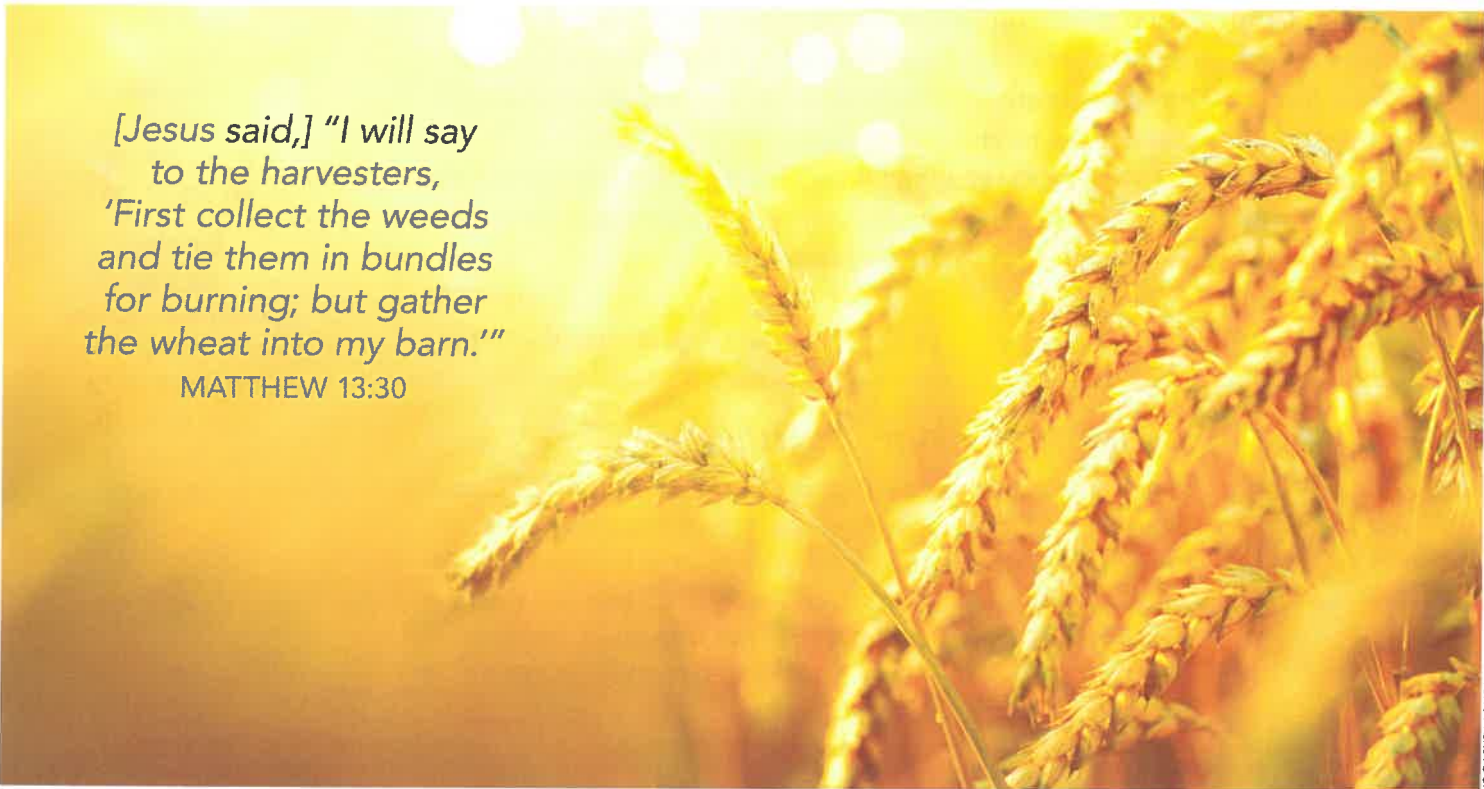
yeast, as insignificant as it might appear, this kingdom can transform all of society.

The parable of the wheat and the weeds is about the last judgment. But it also insists that the field (society), even the Church, is made up of both good and bad. It is very dangerous to try to get rid of what might be considered bad seeds, bad citizens, or bad members. One might pull up the wrong ones. There will be a time of judgment, and it will be in God's time, and in God's hands.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

### FOR *Reflection*

- ★ *We belong to this kingdom. Are we open to all manner of people? Do our lives transform society?*
- ★ *How do you interact with people you think are living wrongly?*



*[Jesus said,] “I will say  
to the harvesters,  
‘First collect the weeds  
and tie them in bundles  
for burning; but gather  
the wheat into my barn.’”*

MATTHEW 13:30

# Dear Padre,

**In Scripture, we hear about the “reign of God” or the “kingdom of God.” How does this notion of “kingdom” fit with modern Catholicism?**

**R**ecently I heard a father tell his son: “I am the master of my domain!” The ten-year-old son was acting up and the father issued a statement clarifying that he, the father, was in charge, and the son was not!

When we hear “reign of God” or “kingdom of God,” we are reminded again that God is “master of our domain.” We acknowledge that it is God who runs the show. Remember when Jesus first began to preach, he asked the people to repent because the kingdom of God was at hand (Matthew 4:17). This “kingdom” is the reign of justice and compassion that had been the core of the Jews’ hopes for centuries preceding Jesus. This reign comes now in the person of Jesus. His preaching and work proclaim the birth of this new regime. It is a kingship where God, in the person of Jesus, now lives among the people (Luke 17:20–21).

What virtues must we practice as members of the kingdom? These are outlined by Jesus in the beatitudes given in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3–10). Jesus pronounces that those who are blessed are those who live such a life as Jesus chose for himself. Our rewards are also outlined here. God will comfort us, fill us with good things, and make us children of God.

It is our task, then, to proclaim the kingdom of God by living like Jesus. One of the ways we do this is through the Sunday liturgy. It is there that we both hear how Jesus lived and prayed for “your kingdom come.”

—Fr. Paul J. Coury, CSSR  
[Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org](mailto:Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org)



## Calendar

### Monday

JULY 20  
Weekday  
Mi 6:1–4, 6–8  
Mt 12:38–42

### Tuesday

JULY 21  
Weekday  
Mi 7:14–15, 18–20  
Mt 12:46–50

### Wednesday

JULY 22  
St. Mary Magdalene  
Sg 3:1–4b or  
2 Cor 5:14–17  
Jn 20:1–2, 11–18

### Thursday

JULY 23  
Weekday  
Jer 2:1–3, 7–8, 12–13  
Mt 13:10–17

### Friday

JULY 24  
Weekday  
Jer 3:14–17  
Mt 13:18–23

### Saturday

JULY 25  
St. James,  
Apostle  
2 Cor 4:7–15  
Mt 20:20–28

### Sunday

JULY 26  
Seventeenth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
1 Kgs 3:5, 7–12  
Rom 8:28–30  
Mt 13:44–52  
or 13:44–46



## A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

***There are no unemployed people in the kingdom of God. Everyone is called to do their part; and there will be a reward from divine justice for everyone in the end...the salvation that Jesus Christ acquired for us with his death and resurrection, a salvation which is not deserved, but donated.***

—ANGELUS, SEPTEMBER 24, 2017