

2020 July 19

## Sixteenth Sunday of the Ordinary Time

### Readings:

First: Wisdom 12.13, 16-19, "You judge with mildness, and with great forbearance" (18b)

Psalms 86, "All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord" (9)

Second: Romans 8.26-27, "The Spirit helps us in our weakness." (26a)

Gospel: Mathew 13.24-43, "An enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat". (25b)

### *Weeds too have a place!*

Weeding and farming are inseparable. In big farms it is done by huge machines, and definitely along with the weeds large number of good seed sprouts also are destroyed. Some consider this advantageous because when weeds are gone, though in the process some good seed sprouts are also destroyed, what remains on the ground is likely to get all the nutrients in the ground enabling them to produce greater yield than growing along with the weeds. Very true!

Our large and small farmers can definitely afford to go this way. But the Big Farmer up above whom Jesus presents in today's parable cannot afford to lose even a single seed sprout. He is willing to suffer the presence of the weeds with his seeds. He is dealing with his children, the humans, who are presented here by Jesus as seeds and weeds. And he is aware that the presence of the bad ones along with the good is doing greater damage than drawing the nutrients. In fact, allowing the 'weeds' to grow side by side is a threat involving greater risk to the good seeds, his good children.

In addition to warding off any damage to his children, this big Farmer also gives to the evildoers a chance to get themselves converted, to be positive, creative and turn to be good and useful for the society. Only after giving sufficient time and patience, and even allowing his good children suffer because of the bad guys, God goes into the process of collecting and burning the weed. In this process the good seeds behave or have to behave as the sprout of the mustard seed, giving shade even to the bad ones, and work as the yeast the woman mixed with the flour in order to ferment and transform the bad ones to good.

In and through the good ones *'the Spirit of God helps in our weakness; for we by ourselves do not know how to deal with or even pray for these weeds, and so the Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words'*. This is what St. Paul tells through Romans 8:26. The book of Wisdom today presents the mindset of God, which says, *"There is no God besides you, Lord, whose care is for all people, to whom you should prove that you have not judged unjustly."* (Wisdom 12.13) These words from Wisdom reinforce the great mercy of the Almighty God. Good to read again and again and again, and ponder if we really bear with the 'weeds' around, or do we ourselves behave as weeds!

Fr. George

