

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

The Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time — July 19, 2020

First Reading — Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

¹³ For neither is there any god besides thee, whose care is for all men, to whom thou shouldst prove that thou hast not judged unjustly; ... ¹⁶ For thy strength is the source of righteousness, and thy sovereignty over all causes thee to spare all.

¹⁷ For thou dost show thy strength when men doubt the completeness of thy power, and dost rebuke any insolence among those who know it.

¹⁸ Thou who art sovereign in strength dost judge with mildness, and with great forbearance thou dost govern us; for thou hast power to act whenever thou dost choose. ¹⁹ Through such works thou has taught thy people that the righteous man must be kind, and thou hast filled thy sons with good hope, because thou givest repentance for sins.

Responsorial Psalm PS 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16

R. (5a) **Lord, you are good and forgiving.**

You, O LORD, are good and forgiving, abounding in kindness to all who call upon you. Hearken, O LORD, to my prayer and attend to the sound of my pleading.

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

All the nations you have made shall come and worship you, O LORD, and glorify your name.

For you are great, and you do wondrous deeds; you alone are God.

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

You, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity. Turn toward me, and have pity on me; give your strength to your servant.

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

Second Reading — Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Gospel Reading — Matthew 13:24-43

²⁴ Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷ And the servants of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'" ³¹ Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all 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." ³³ He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened." ³⁴ All this Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed he said nothing to them without a parable. ³⁵ This was to fulfil what was spoken by

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the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world." ³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷ He answered, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; the weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading — Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

1. Describe the joyous aspects of God's justice.

Second Reading — Romans 8:26-27

2. How does the Holy Spirit help us live a life consistent with God's will and Kingdom?

Gospel Reading — Matthew 13:24-43

3. Describe your understanding of what the "reign of God" means.
4. What characteristic from these parables most impressed you about the "reign of God"?
5. Where do you see yourself in Jesus' explanation of the first parable?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.