

**The Impatient Man and the Patient God. 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A July 19th 2020. (Wisdom 12:13,16-19, Rom. 8:26-27, Matt. 13:24-43)**

The parable of the sower we heard last Sunday reminded us that human hearts are so complicated when it comes to receiving the word of God. Today's parable of the wheat and the weeds tells us that within the same human heart good and evil exist together. But God is so patient that he does not judge us prematurely. Whereas man is impatient, our God is patient with us. I once watched a movie entitled, "the good, the bad, and the ugly." At the end of the movie, the good became bad, the bad turned out to be good and the ugly ended up being beautiful. That movie taught me a lesson not to judge people prematurely and this perfectly explains today's parable given by Jesus to his disciples.

The owner of the field said to his servants, "let them grow together until harvest" The reality is that good and evil co-exist and so the growth of the Kingdom embraces both wheats and weeds, both good and evil. So, on this 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time the readings call on us to reflect on God's patience in dealing with evil. We serve a God who is lenient, patient and compassionate towards his children. Unlike God, human beings are impatient when it comes to judging others. Sometimes we hastily judge somebody to be a bad man only to realise later that he is a good man and vice versa.

Our first reading is taken from the book of Wisdom in which the author says that our God acts with mercy and justice. He says this about God, "although you are sovereign in strength, you judge with mildness, and with great leniency you govern us; for you have power to act whenever you choose." It is significant to note that the word "merciful" is derived from the Hebrew word "rechem" which is the word for "womb." Its root meaning is "protection from harm" as the

womb protects the baby from harm. Thus, our God has the same compassion that a mother shows the child of her womb. Our God is indeed rich in mercy and kindness, as our responsorial psalm says, “you, O Lord, are good and forgiving... Turn toward me and have pity on me;”

In today’s gospel from Matthew, Jesus gives us three parables about the Kingdom of heaven: 1, the parable of the wheat and the weeds, 2, the parable of the mustard seed, and 3, the parable of the yeast. The 1st parable also called the parable of the wheat and the darnel. The darnel, also called “zizanian” in Greek, was poisonous weeds that caused dizziness and sickness. In its early stage the darnel looks just like the wheat and was indistinguishable from the wheat.

The owner confronts two problems: how to save the wheats, and how to outwit the enemy who sowed the weeds. The parable tells us, “While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off.” This tells us that anything sown in secret will surely come into public domain at harvest. The farmer lets the weeds and the wheats grow together until harvest time. It exemplifies the infinite mercy of God toward sinners. God gives every sinner the chance and more time to change even up to the last moment of his or her life. We must imitate the patience God shows in his dealings with sinners by looking on them as our brothers and sisters to bring them to the right path. Sometimes it is very difficult to be patient and forgiving, but St. Paul tells us in the 2nd reading that, the Spirit comes to help us in our prayer and weakness.

Similarly, the mustard seed grows from humble beginning as smallest seed, then into a big tree, then providing shade. The yeast that a woman took and mixed with the flour grows until all of it was leavened. The seed of the Kingdom of

heaven may not be seen immediately, but it takes time and patience to grow to bear fruits, or it takes time and patience for the yeast to make the whole bread leaven. Good and evil co-exist at the same time in every human heart but God takes time and patience not to judge us prematurely. May God help us avoid hasty judgement and be lenient and compassionate in our dealings with others.
Amen.

By Fr. Emmanuel Subaar