



**July 23, 2017 Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 106 Gospel MT 13:24-43**

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."

**Spiritual Reflection:** Jesus' teaching of the weeds and wheat is a reminder that we need to learn and practice the art of discernment. Not every idea that pops into our head are going to be good ideas. It is important to remember that temptations are not sins. It is what we do with them that matter. For example, I may be tempted to skip prayer and if I do I commit a sin. If I do not skip my prayers but instead use my temptation to skip prayer as a sign that I should pray more than I have actually increased in virtue.

**Spiritual Questions:**

1. What are some weeds (bad thinking) that you fall into again and again?
2. Why do you think God allows temptations to enter into your life?
3. Describe a time in which you turned a temptation to do something bad into a moment of doing something good.
4. How do bad ideas lead to frustrations?
5. How does good ideas lead to happiness?