

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Matthew 13:24–43

‘Let both grow together until the harvest.’

At that time: Jesus put another parable before the crowd, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, “Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?” He said to them, “An enemy has done this.” So the servants said to him, “Then do you want us to go and gather them?” But he said, “No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. 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.” He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.” All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.” 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.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”

Reflection

In today’s Gospel, Jesus tells three parables about the Kingdom of Heaven. It can be tempting to focus on the weeds and to notice what is wrong with ourselves, other people, or the world around us. Yet Jesus reminds us that God sees more deeply. He is patient, giving people time to grow, change, and become who they are called to be. As Vincentians, we are called to look for the wheat rather than the weeds. When St Vincent de Paul met people living in poverty, he did not see their problems first; he saw their dignity, gifts, and potential. Like the tiny mustard seed, even the smallest act of kindness can grow into something much greater. The Kingdom of Heaven is built every time we choose compassion over judgement and love over indifference. Jesus invites us to trust that God is at work, even when we cannot yet see the full harvest.

Materials needed

- Pens
- Paper

Activity

Think of someone you find difficult to get along with, or someone who is often overlooked.

Write down one positive quality they have, and one small thing you could do this week to show them kindness or encouragement.

Call to Action

This week, look for the wheat, not the weeds—make a conscious effort to notice the good in others and help it grow.

