

19 July 2020 - Homily - Matthew 13:24-43

By: Fr. Paul Magyar

We continue with the parables. The first one today is the parable of the weeds among the wheat. This is an explicit kingdom of God parable and interestingly the seeds are growing secretly. The man who is a householder with slaves plants good seeds. However the slaves are scandalized that there are weeds growing among the seeds. The man advises the slaves to have patience and tolerance until the final sorting.

This indicates that both good and bad people grow up together on the same planet. On a psychological level, a person grows up with good and bad habits and behaviour qualities. These personality qualities get sorted out when one is responsible for his or her actions.

The parable of the mustard seed displays the surprising shift from the near invisibility of the kingdom to its full grandeur and its universal, all-embracing hospitality. The little seed with huge potential in it as it grows into a large shrub where birds can nest.

We as human beings are born small, however we all admire a baby. We see in the baby the great human potential to do great good in the world.

In Jesus's time it was the chief woman of the household who had the privilege to knead bread for the entire family and look after the sight of the dough rising as a result of the catalytic effect of the bit of leaven mixed with it. A bit of leaven can make a large change just like God's plan working almost invisibly in society can bring forth the kingdom of God. However in Jewish tradition leaven often had the symbolic meaning of evil. It was related to the proneness or tendency to sin in an individual. Connect it with the ritual of passover and we notice that Unleavened Bread is used, just like we use at mass. The sinless bread. However Jesus uses leaven positively as the symbol for the power of God.

Jesus explains the parable of the weeds. The field is the human world and evil is the devil. Jesus explains that the kingdom of God is given to the Son of Man and he will bring it to the earth in its fullness at the end of the age which is the harvest. According to the gospel of Matthew the Kingdom is a mixed body of saints and sinners on earth, until the final sifting by God's angels. The evil weeds have to be kept under control even if not eliminated entirely because they choke the wheat. The church needs to constantly pursue holiness however avoid unrealistic purism. Patience and tolerance is necessary because only God is the sifter and judge.

Praying for all of you.

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