

KINGDOM OF GOD. Taken by itself, the parable of the Wheat and the Weeds, as with all the parables in the chapter, addresses the nature of the kingdom of God. If, as Jesus maintains (Matt 4:17; 12:28), the kingdom has already dawned, why such continuing prevalence of evil? Why has God not already intervened to root out evil and establish God's rule once and for all?

To this the parable responds that the onset of the kingdom is not taking place on neutral ground. A powerful opposition is at work, holding human hearts against it. Hence the slowness of its growth.

In Palestine a poisonous weed known as darnel affects wheat crops. In the early stages of growth it looks very like the young shoots of wheat. By the time both plants can be distinguished, the roots are so entwined as to make tearing out the darnel very injurious to the wheat.

GOOD AND EVIL CO-EXIST. Likewise, good and evil are at present so inextricably co-existent in the world as to make too ruthless an attempt to eradicate the one fatal to a successful harvest of the other. In the harvest time to come, however, God will deal once and for all with evil, before gathering in 'the wheat' of the kingdom.

The parable can apply to the world as a whole, to the Church, to any smaller community within the Church or even to an individual person's own moral and spiritual life. So often a person's or a community's good qualities spring from the same source as their reprehensible ones. An irascible person may be vigorous in struggling for justice; a laid-back character a good listener – and so on. Christianity's long history of intolerance – the Inquisition, etc. – shows the tragedy and folly of being more zealous to root out evil than to encourage good. Jesus seems to suggest that God can cope for quite a time with the continuing existence of evil in order to preserve or promote a wider good.

The allegorical explanation of the parable pushes its focus strongly in the direction of judgment, with almost exclusive concentration on the negative.

Traditionally, the parable has been interpreted as bearing on the continuing prevalence of evil as well as good in the Church. But the primary identification of the 'field' in the parable is with 'the world' rather than the Church (v. 38b).

The interpretation would, then, address and account for the situation whereby "the children of the kingdom" (= 'the church') continue to suffer at the hands of evildoers. In this case, the final judgment, rather than a threat hanging over members of the Church, will be their vindication; persecution will not last for ever; evildoers will eventually suffer the fate their behaviour deserves.

COMFORT AND CHALLENGE. This complex parable, then, presents comfort as well as challenge to the church. That said, the accompanying imagery (hell-fire, etc.) may need some comment. Literalistic understandings of such features will hardly promote growth in faith and virtue today.

The two shorter parables again address the nature of the kingdom in the interests of encouragement. The kingdom may be unimpressive in its current manifestation in the activity of Jesus. But before long, like the mustard seed, it will have sprouted up into something far greater – a substantial tree to which many, like the birds of the air, will flock.

Leaven, going about its work silently and unobtrusively within measures of flour produces a result totally out of proportion to its size. So too the kingdom, may not have spectacular beginnings but, as proclaimed and enacted by Jesus, it is quietly and effectively working transformation.

Brendan Byrne, SJ, FAHA,

Thank you for your prayers. Mary MacKillop Today supports thousands of people in Timor-Leste, Peru, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and here in Australia, bringing hope to communities for generations to come. Please pray for Mary MacKillop Today especially during the challenging times we all face, so that we can continue to transform lives through our vital works carrying on the legacy of Saint Mary MacKillop. If you'd like to learn about Mary MacKillop Today please contact us via Ph: (02) 8912 2777 Email: hello@marymackilloptoday.org.au or visit: www.marymackilloptoday.org.au



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

FIRST READING *Wisdom 12:13,16-19*

A Reading from the book of wisdom.

There is no god, other than you, who cares for everything, to whom you might have to prove that you never judged unjustly; Your justice has its source in strength, your sovereignty over all makes you lenient to all. You show your strength when your sovereign power is questioned and you expose the insolence of those who know it; but, disposing of such strength, you are mild in judgement, you govern us with great lenience, for you have only to will, and your power is there. By acting thus you have taught a lesson to your people how the virtuous man must be kindly to his fellow men, and you have given your sons the good hope that after sin you will grant repentance.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 85:5-6,9-10,15-16

R. O Lord, you are good and forgiving.

- O Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of love to all who call. Give heed, O Lord, to my prayer and attend to the sound of my voice. **R.**
- All the nations shall come to adore you and glorify your name, O Lord: for you are great and do marvellous deeds, you who alone are God. **R.**
- But you, God of mercy and compassion, slow to anger, O Lord, abounding in love and truth, turn and take pity on me. **R.**

SECOND READING

Romans 8:26-27

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.

The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness. For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means, and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are according to the mind of God.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Ep1:17,18

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:24-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus put another parable before the crowds: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off. When the new wheat sprouted and ripened, the darnel appeared as well. The owner's servants went to him and said, "Sir, was it not good seed that you sowed in your field? If so, where does the darnel come from?" "Some enemy has done this" he answered. And the servants said, "Do you want us to go and weed it out?" But he said, "No, because when you weed out the darnel you might pull up the wheat with it. Let them both grow till the harvest; and at harvest time I shall say to the reapers: First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burnt, then gather the wheat into my barn."'

The Gospel of the Lord.

CREED

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
(All bow during these two lines)
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again
from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

ST PAUL'S PARISH

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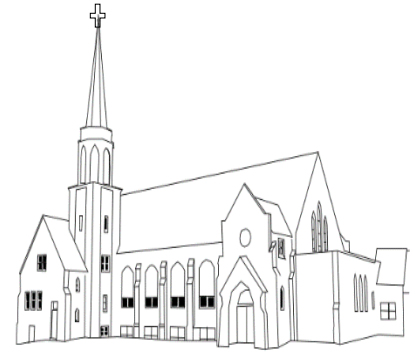
Parish Priest: Fr. Raymond Bugeja

Parish Secretary: Mrs Loretta Meilak

St Paul's School Principal: Mrs Maria Mercuri

School Tel: 9354-8970

St Paul's Parish strives to create an environment where children are safe, respected and cared for.



PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon - Friday: 10.30am to 3.30 pm.

MASSES:

Weekends: Saturday: 6:00 pm (vigil),
8.00pm (Neo Catechumenate)

Sunday: 9:00am, 10.30am (Italian),

Weekdays: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri: 10.00 am.

CONFESSIONS: Saturdays - 11am and 6.45pm

CHILDREN'S LITURGY: 1st & 3rd Sunday of month-9am Mass

ADORATION: First Friday of the month: 10.30 am to 12pm

BAPTISMS: Sundays at 12.00 pm.

BAPTISM PREPERATION MEETINGS: Once Monthly

MARRIAGE PREP MEETINGS: Wed 8pm or Sat 4pm

WEDDING REHEARSALS: Mon or Fri – 8pm

COMMUNION TO THE HOUSEBOUND: Thurs & Fri.

COMMUNION TO SICK at Bupa & Northern Gardens:
every 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK: 2 times a year (Lent & Advent).

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 10am

YOUTH & KIDS GROUP: 4th Friday of the month.

ITALIAN PRAYER GROUP: Wednesdays at 10.30 am

Legion of Mary: Monday mornings at 10.30 am.

Knights of the Southern Cross: Monday mornings.

ANNUAL ITALIAN FEASTS 2020:

St Joseph: Sun 15th March at 2pm.

Way of the Cross: Good Friday at 7pm.

St Anthony: Sun 14th June at 10.30am

St Gregory: Sun 15th Nov at 10.30 am.

Our Lady of Mt Carmel: Sun 29th Nov at 2pm.

St Lucy: Sun 6th Dec at 2pm.

IMPORTANT NEWS:

CHURCH CLOSURE, AGAIN. This is a very brief message to you all regarding the Premier announcement regarding new restriction levels across Metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire. Before sending updated Guidelines to you, we are waiting for clear directives as to the boundaries Parishes will fall under for the return to Level 3 Restrictions.

For those who sit clearly within metropolitan postcodes along with those in Mitchell Shire, Level 3 states:

- If you live in a restricted postcode you cannot attend a religious service. Online streaming of a service is allowed.
- Weddings in restricted postcodes can have a maximum of five people (the couple, two witnesses and the celebrant). You can travel to a wedding outside a restricted postcode. The restrictions apply based on the location of the wedding.
- Funerals held in restricted postcodes will be restricted to 10 mourners plus people required to conduct the funeral. You can travel to a funeral outside a restricted postcode. The restrictions apply based on the location of the funeral.
- Churches in restricted postcodes are closed for private worship or religious ceremonies (except for live streaming, Weddings and Funerals as directed).

There may be further directions to come, and we will endeavour to get these and all information to you as soon as possible.

THANKSGIVING ENVELOPES. Your continued support has been always appreciated, but especially, in these times that affected financially, everyone, including the parish. There is also the opportunity for cashless online payments via CDFPay for Parishes online payment portal. This site enables you to make quick and easy online thanksgiving payments. The St Paul's Catholic Church, Coburg site is live and can be found via this link:

<https://secure.artezpacific.com/registant/donate.aspx?eventId=52905&spid=5635719>

Alternatively, the Parish Bank Details for Direct Debit are:

BSB: 083-347

Account Number: 67541 0884

Account Name: St Paul's Catholic Church

Thank you for your continued support of the parish during this difficult time. Peace. Fr. Raymond Bugeja

JOKE OF THE WEEK:



JUNE COLLECTION:

1st Collection	Sacrificial Offering	\$ 3281.00
2nd Collection:	Presbytery	\$ 1039.00

WE PRAY FOR

We pray for those in our local community who are **sick** and vulnerable: may they see in us the followers of a God who heals and serves.

Let us pray for those who have died, and those whose anniversaries we remember at this time: Shirley Trowbridge, that they may enter the peace of God.

STEWARDSHIP:

“The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field...He who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom.” (Matthew 13:24, 37-38). As children of God, we are all “good seeds.” We are blessed by God with the potential to accomplish much good in the world. We fulfill God’s plan when we spend time in prayer every day, use our skills to help others, and share our financial gifts to help build God’s kingdom on earth. Through our example of gratitude and generosity we sow “good seeds” on earth and ultimately help each other get to Heaven!

REFLECTION: HELP IN OUR WEAKNESS

The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness. Romans 8:26. Many are the times when I’ve felt I just couldn’t manage to get through something difficult, whether that was struggling with a crushing work situation, a relationship tangle that seemed beyond any possibility of reconciliation or my inability to be patient with my efforts to overcome some negative aspect of my personality, such as avoiding forgiveness of someone. What I have repeatedly discovered is that I do not have to do this all by myself. In fact, I can’t do it all alone. Countless times, I’ve experienced the Spirit nudging me in my time of prayer or assisting me through a wise advisor to find the courage and perception needed to take the right and necessary steps. In our culture today, individualism and independence are overrated when it comes to growing spiritually. We should never discount the value and indispensable aid of the Spirit to guide us when we experience our weakness and are in need. **Sr. Joyce Rupp, O.S.M.**

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

That we may allow stewardship to blossom in our hearts and joyfully share our gifts.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK – Tomorrow: The Future

I never think of the future. It comes soon enough.

Albert Einstein

VOCATION VIEW

There are many weeds growing with the wheat in our lives. Sometimes the weeds strangle our growth, or prevent us from hearing clearly God’s voice. We need time to reflect on the garden of our life.

“**Heart of Life** is offering a “Retreat in Everyday Life – All Shall Be Well” – over five weeks, beginning Monday, 3 August and concluding 31 August. This at-home retreat, available via Zoom, invites you to spend some time in prayer at home each day pondering your experiences of the day, and to be accompanied by a prayer-companion on how God might have been present for you. To register your interest, please call 9890 1101 or email holsc@bigpond.com, no later than Monday 27 July.”

NEWS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

Dear friends in Christ,

Today’s decision to place metropolitan Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire areas back into Stage 3 lockdown for the next six weeks from 11.59pm Wednesday 8 July is sobering news. It is truly disheartening, and will bring renewed distress to so many families and individuals.

These words from Psalm 22 have come immediately to my mind (words that were on the lips of Jesus as he was crucified): My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. (Ps 22.1-2)

Yet, I want to encourage you in grace, trusting in the abiding closeness of our loving Lord, who promised to be with us always.

In returning to Stage 3 restrictions in those specific areas, sadly the public celebration of Mass, which we have only just re-commenced, will need to go back to live-streaming; churches will need to be closed again to any private prayer; and the numbers allowed for funerals and weddings will be severely limited.

We expect specific details around the restrictions will be released by the civil authorities over the next 24 hours, and will be communicated to you as soon as possible. I ask for your patience in the meantime.

Now is a time for attentiveness to the care of one another. In the face of our own despondency and fears, our fatigue and anxieties, may we learn to hold firm in faith and hope, and experience sustaining moments of love. As the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews encouraged: Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. (Heb 24.10)

Friends, while the Psalmist knew struggle and pain, there were also words of confidence that came from the heart: In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame. (Ps 22.4-5)

May our Lord Jesus be with you, and may His Blessed Mother accompany us all.

With every grace and blessing, I remain, Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Archbishop Peter Comensoli 07.07.20

