

[101] SIXTEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME A

FIRST READING

In place of sin you give repentance.

A reading from the book of Wisdom

12:13, 16-19

There is no God but you,
and you care for all of us.
You don't have to prove that you judge fairly.

Your strength gives you the power to do right,
and because you rule over all,
you have pity on everyone.

When someone doubts how strong you are,
you show your strength.
And you correct everyone who is too proud.

You are a powerful Master.
But you judge us with kindness and rule with great mercy,
because you have the power to do whatever you want.

By doing such things,
you have taught your people
that those who do right must also care about others.
And you have given your children a wonderful hope
by helping them turn from sin.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

86:5-6, 15-16de

R. (5a) Lord, you are good and forgiving.

You willingly forgive,
and your love is always there
for those who pray to you.
Please listen, Lord!
Answer my prayer for help.

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

You, the Lord God,
are kind and merciful.
You don't easily get angry,
and your love
can always be trusted.
Look on me with kindness.
Make me strong and save me.

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

SECOND READING

That very Spirit intercedes for us
with longings too deep for words.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans

8:26-27

Brothers and sisters:

In certain ways we are weak,
but the Spirit is here to help us.
For example, when we don't know what to pray for,
the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words.
All of our thoughts are known to God.
He can understand what is in the mind of the Spirit,
as the Spirit prays for God's people.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

See Matthew 11:25

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

Let them grow together until the harvest.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 13:24-30

Jesus told his disciples this story:

“The kingdom of heaven is like what happened
when a farmer scattered good seed in a field.

But while everyone was sleeping,

an enemy came and scattered weed seeds in the field and then left.

When the plants came up and began to ripen,

the farmer’s servants could see the weeds.

“The servants came and asked,

‘Sir, didn’t you scatter good seed in your field?

Where did these weeds come from?’

‘An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“His servants then asked,

‘Do you want us to go out and pull up the weeds?’

‘No!’ he answered.

‘You might also pull up the wheat.

Leave the weeds alone until harvest time.

Then I’ll tell my workers to gather the weeds

and tie them up and burn them.

But I’ll have them store the wheat in my barn.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Opening Prayer:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you love your children giving them graces in time of sorrow.

Help us make choices to always love and choose you.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Readings:

Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

Psalms 86:5-6, 15-16de

Romans 8:26-27

Matthew 13:24-30

Opening Reflection:

The theme for today serves as a reminder of how much God loves us even when we make choices that turn us away from God. The image Jesus uses here is a common everyday example of planting, harvesting, and sorting the good fruit from the bad. Weeds can spoil and even kill a good harvest if they are not separated and destroyed at the proper time. Uprooting them too early, though, can destroy the good plants in the process. Just as nature teaches us patience, so God's patience also teaches us to guard the word God has planted in our hearts and to beware of the destructive force of sin and evil which can destroy it.

To begin invite the children to discuss the following ideas:

- ◆ What choices do I make that demonstrate love for my parents?
- ◆ What choices do I make that does not show love for my parents?
- ◆ How do you know that your parents love you even when you do things that displease them?

Listening to the Word of God

Read Matthew 13: 24-30 [Let them grow together until the harvest].

Scripture Discussion Starters

- ◆ In the parable of the wheat and the weeds, what did Jesus talk about that was familiar to the people?
- ◆ What is the first thing you want to do when you see a garden where weeds are growing along with plants?
- ◆ What is wrong with pulling weeds that are mixed in with plants?

(Continue on page 2)

Scripture Background

Explain that when Jesus taught in parables [stories with a message] he used things that were familiar to the people to teach spiritual messages. As you discuss the parable, have the children listen for the hidden spiritual message.

God's word brings life, but Satan seeks to destroy the good seed which has been planted in the hearts of those who have heard God's word. Good and evil are sown in our hearts like tiny seeds which germinate, and in due time yield a harvest of good or bad fruit.

Reflection and Questions for Deeper Reflection

In a garden, often those things we call weeds have a much stronger hold in the ground and grow quickly compared to young plants, such as wheat. When we pull up the weeds, the desired plants can come with them. Many of us are willing to sacrifice a plant or two to this necessary removal of the undesired weeds. In this parable, Jesus is saying, "No, all of the plants are sacred. All are important."

As human beings none of us are 100 percent pure or 100 percent evil. We are a mixture and find ourselves doing good deeds and deeds that are not so good. Nevertheless, God loves us.

- ◆ Who do you think the farmer is in this parable? [Jesus Christ and those who preach the Gospel of Jesus]
- ◆ What does the wheat represent? [Followers of Jesus]
- ◆ Who comes at night to sow the weeds? [Enemy, Satan, Evil in the world]
- ◆ What does the harvest represent? [Jesus' Second Coming]
- ◆ Which do you want to be, the wheat or the weeds?

Activity

See attached sample activities

Prayers and Intercessions:

Let us pray for the Church, may she continue to make choices that bring about a good harvest.

Let us pray for the world, may peace and justice be a reality.

Let us pray for those in need, may God help them to experience peace in their lives.

Let us pray for the [insert your local parish name] community, may they hear the Good News and respond with generous hearts.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

SEEDS

Bring a seed of some type (fruit, vegetable, rice, wheat, and bean). Discuss what it takes for a seed to grow and bring forth good fruit.

COLORING

Have children color the attached page while the story is being read. Explain that the word “tares” is another name for weeds.

MAZE

Have the children spend time finding their way through the maze. Discuss if this was easy or hard for them. What made it easy or hard?

WORD SEEK

There are two word searches. First review the words the children will be searching so they gain an understanding. Then distribute according to age ability.

Circle the Correct Word or answer Circle True or False:

1. “The kingdom of heaven is like what happened when a farmer scattered good [thread, seed] in his field.”
2. “...but while everyone slept a friend came and planted weeds.” TRUE or FALSE
3. The servants went out right away and pulled up the weeds? TRUE or FALSE
4. The [farmer, relative] told the servants to leave the weeds alone until harvest.
5. The [wheat, weeds] will be stored in a barn after harvest.
6. “Leave the weeds alone until harvest time.” TRUE or FALSE.



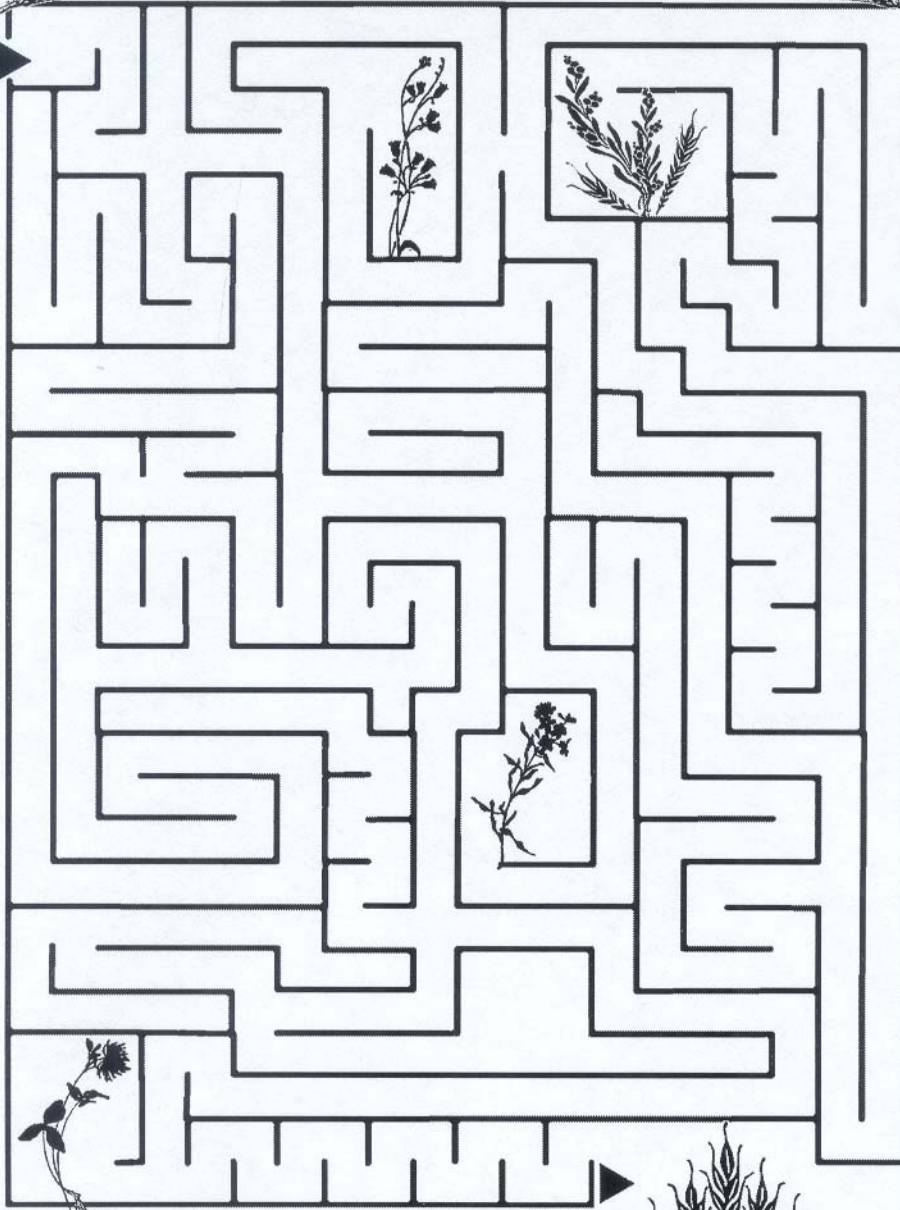
"Jesus told His disciples a parable about wheat and tares."
Matthew 13:24 – 30, 36 – 43

Parable

The Wheat and the Weeds

Help the owner of the field separate the wheat from the weeds.

START



Jesus said that the Kingdom of God was like a man who sowed his field with quality wheat seed. While he was sleeping his enemy crept in and sowed weeds. Rather than risk hurting the wheat he chose to let them grow together until harvest time. Then the reapers gathered the weeds to be burned and gathered the wheat into the barn.



PARABLE OF WHEAT & TARES

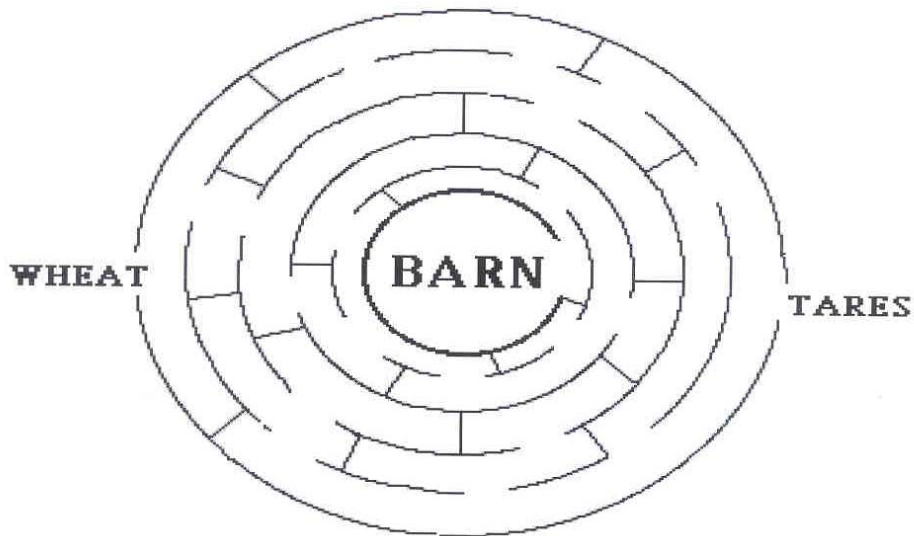
(MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43)

I R E H T A G Q Y S L W F R P
O M G I B T T D Y H Z N R A B
V G D W R E I J O M B Y I C N
Q W H E A T O Q F B P P B G U
H F D E E S D O O G S L E P T
Z A T Z B J T R V S J Z G R O
E H R A F Z A I B V H W Y G F
N A E V R I N L S O G B P N L
E W P K E E E S E L D N U B L
M B Z K K S S L V J N R U B M
Y P C Q E Z T S D J E M Y G S
U E C J F K R T M E U W B Z Z
K I N G D O M O F H E A V E N
A S Q B J C P F A A W U D J F
N D E W O S I A Z W D M A N P

BARN
BUNDLES
BURN
ENEMY
FIELD

GATHER
GOOD SEED
HARVEST
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
MAN

SLEPT
SOWED
TARES
WHEAT



The Wheat and the Tares

Matthew 13: 24-30

Look carefully at the words below. Each of these has been hidden in the word search.
 Words can be on the horizontal, diagonal, backwards, forwards, up and down.

R U L
 W F E C G
 S O W E D D M
 R B G K L V
 J Y G M B T E W
 P H Y J S O S H I G
 V B W T R D I F C
 A Y M E N E E S F A
 R B G I A N E T S F
 N V A U L A W L U Q
 K T K P M E E Z Q X
 C H L D E K C D R R
 P E L P T N A V R E S
 S A O R I O O M G O O D
 N H C A N B V G B W X S P C T
 E S G I E N E Y H U A O K B K
 P P A L W T J E B P R F I X
 U R M C H I A F L S T N
 V P G U L E S T P A Q O D
 T S H X C N R Y S R W E D R
 O E A K V G X E E C R P E
 Y G L R L F A R D F G B
 V S D K V P P A L R R R
 S E N E E Q T O U G
 M E R U M S N H I
 S F N B R T E T
 G A U B N S
 B R M B U
 E M I O
 B V E H
 M L R R
 P O R C

- HOUSEHOLDER
- SLEEPING
- THISTLE
- TOGETHER
- BUNDLES
- REAPERS
- HARVEST
- SERVANT
- FARMER
- GATHER
- PLANTS
- SPRUNG
- BLADE
- FIELD
- WEEDS
- WHEAT
- TARES
- SOWED
- FRUIT
- ENEMY
- GRAIN
- SEED
- BIND
- SORT
- GOOD
- BORE
- BURN
- BARN
- CROP
- GROW
- MAN