



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY July 23 & BEYOND

## The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares



In this Sunday's gospel lesson (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43) we again join the great crowds listening to Jesus' teaching, this time on one of the greatest challenges to our faith: the problem of evil. The problem is basically this: if God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving, why is there evil and suffering in the world? Anyone who's been personally confronted with evil or tragic suffering knows how difficult this is to wrestle with, and the Bible and Church Tradition have *a lot* to say in response, far more than I can cover here. But I do want to offer some positive encouragement and emphasize what God has made available to us in the kingdom of heaven, rather than what the enemy is trying to take away.

First and foremost, Jesus is making it clear that when the final judgment comes God will triumph and everything will be set right. God is in complete control of whatever evil we might encounter and will bring an unimaginably greater good out of it, which gives us hope even when the enemy wants to surround us with darkness. We can give God room to increase our faith in this promise when we resist the evil present among us, and to do that we need to be aware of how it got there.

In order to open the door to the love we were created for, God gave us each free will; the freedom to choose to serve him at our own expense. When Adam and Eve instead used their free will to serve themselves at God's expense, the opposite happened. They opened the door to evil and allowed the enemy of Jesus' parable to enter the world God created "good" and sow weeds among the wheat. Since we have the same free will, we need to be aware that when we're careless with our thoughts, words, and actions we allow weeds to grow in our hearts as well.

The danger comes because we often don't recognize our selfishness or how destructive it is in the moment, and we see that reflected in the parable. The word translated "weeds" is actually "*darnel*," a specific poisonous weed that's almost identical to wheat before it ripens, which is exactly how sin works. It's not until some poisonous word or deed springs out of what we thought was a fruitful and generous heart that we realize that we'd let in something that didn't belong.

It's here that we find hope in another promise: that while Jesus doesn't leave room for the weeds to become wheat in the parable, he's come specifically so that through him we might bear fruit and glorify the Father. So instead of being defined by our worst moments and uprooted from the kingdom, we can repent and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, start eradicating our other weeds and keeping those seeds from taking root in the first place.

Father J. D. McQueen II

## CALENDAR

SUNDAY:            8:00a Low Mass (Church)  
                         9:30a Christian Formation – The Gospel of Matthew (Fireside Room)  
                         10:30a Solemn Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue*—

*Note: Child care is provided at the 8:00a, 10:30a Mass, Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.*

MONDAY            7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY:        Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

THURSDAY       6:30p Evening Prayer (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY:           9:00a Morning Prayer (St. Mary's Chapel)

                         9:30a Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

AA Meetings

                         8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

                         8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)