



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller



Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 19, 2014

There are many terrible things that happen in this world, and there are many terrible things that we humans do to each other. We can find examples in parts of the world far from here and in the histories of things that happened in the distant past. But we can also look right here in our own city, or even in our own homes and neighborhoods. Many times we feel like asking God why he allows so many bad things to happen, and why he allows there to be so many “bad” people. Jesus’ first parable in the Gospel just proclaimed gives us an answer this question.

We are God’s children, sown into the world to grow in his love. But there are also people around us who do not know the Lord, or even reject him. There are also evil influences and the works of the evil one in many parts of our world. Just like the farmer allowed the good grain and the weeds to grow together, waiting until the harvest to separate them, our God has decided to wait to separate good from evil here in this world. We often get upset and think that God is not doing anything to help us, but his patience is truly an act of mercy.

If we are honest with ourselves, we will recognize that we are not always the good wheat growing tall in Jesus’ story. We are often the weeds. We hurt others, cut them down, ignore them or dismiss them, we judge them or take advantage of them. Often we do evil deeds or turn our eyes away from the Lord. If we are being honest with ourselves, we would be glad that God is patient with those who do evil, because that means he is patient with us!

The Book of Wisdom praises God for his mercy in the prayer it makes to him: “Though you are master of might, you judge with clemency, and with much lenience you govern us... you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins.” Our God has patience with us, allowing us to continue to grow with him, so that we may bear fruit. He has given us his patience so that we may find ourselves in his house come harvest time. As Pope Francis has said it: “There is no limit to the divine mercy, which is offered to everyone... The Lord is always ready to roll away the tombstone of our sins, which separate us from Him, the light of the living” (Sunday Angelus Message, April 6, 2014).

But God goes even further than this. He is not just being patient and hoping that we can fight against the weeds that seek to corrupt us. He has put his Holy Spirit within us, so that we may grow strong. “The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness” (Rom). Even when we do not know what to do, or how to pray, “the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings” (Rom). What a cause for hope we have my brothers and sisters, that God himself – the Holy Spirit – has made his dwelling with us and intercedes for us!

This is why even a little faith is enough to help us grow into fruitful creations for the Lord. We are like that mustard seed, or that leaven in Jesus’ other parables. Just a little accomplishes great deeds, because it is the Holy Spirit that drives us and lifts us up.

We have consecrated ourselves to the Holy Spirit in this Archdiocese, and we have called upon his name and asked him to guide us. Hear the groanings of the Spirit today, my friends. He is here to challenge us, to help us to grow, and to remind us to call upon the Lord's mercy.

We are sinful and weak, but the Lord is holy and strong, and the Lord is with us. Let us lift up our voices with the psalmist today as we give praise to our God: “You, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in kindness to all who call upon you. Hearken, O Lord, to my prayer and attend to the sound of my pleading. Turn toward me, and have pity on me; give your strength to your servant” (Ps). We may sometimes be the

weeds, or we may sometimes be discouraged or hurt by the weeds around us, but through Holy Spirit that dwells in us, we can bear much fruit.

Never lose hope my brothers and sisters, because we ARE the people of hope. May Our Lady teach us to hope in the Lord just as she did. May she who opened herself completely to the power of the Holy Spirit, teach us to do the same, that we may be the fruitful, faithful, and hopeful children of God we were created to be.