



Jesus said,
“The kingdom of heaven
may be likened to a
man who sowed good
seed in his field.”

Matthew 13:24

July 19, 2020

**SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**



Saint Sharbel Makhlūf (1828-1898)

July 24

The convenience store owner chatted animatedly in Arabic with coworkers, but hardly at all with his American clientele. So soon after 9/11, he probably figured, with my accent, the less said, the better. That changed when an American customer recognized Saint Sharbel's portrait on the wall: "So you're Lebanese Maronites!" The owner was happily incredulous: "You know our saint?" "Not at first," the customer admitted. "But we help the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, and their magazine published that picture and called Sharbel the 'Paradoxical Artisan of Peace.'" "Everyone thinks we're Muslims," said the owner, "and some of my workers are. Saint Sharbel helps us live together in peace!" A hermit for twenty-three years, little is known of Sharbel's life. He died after suffering a stroke while celebrating the liturgy. Miracles attributed to his intercession number in the thousands, and in war-torn Lebanon, Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims pray together where his incorrupt body is entombed. How lovely if after our passing, we too could be remembered for having brought very different people to the one God, together in peace.

—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Words And Weeds

A man of words and not of deeds
Is like a garden full of weeds.

—Anonymous nursery rhyme

Good Seeds

Today Jesus continues to speak to his followers using parables. What a rich treasure we are given today in three parables about the kingdom of heaven! The kingdom is likened to a man sowing good seed in his field, a mustard seed, and yeast mixed with flour. As they did last week, today the disciples press Jesus for an interpretation of one of the parables—the parable of the man sowing good seed. Lest we think that these parables are simply amusing little anecdotes, Jesus' interpretation should be seen for what it is—a warning. Wailing and grinding of teeth in a fiery furnace await those who are children of the evil one. This parable points to the struggle for today's believer. Sometimes, through sin, we sow weeds and prevent the love of Christ from blossoming. Let today's Gospel help put us back on track. Let us recommit ourselves to preparing for the last days, the harvest, by blossoming as the good seeds we were created in love to be.

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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Mi 6:1-4, 6-8; Ps 50:5-6, 8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23; Mt 12:38-42
Tuesday:	Mi 7:14-15, 18-20; Ps 85:2-8; Mt 12:46-50
Wednesday:	Sg 3:1-4b or 2 Cor 5:14-17; Ps 63:2-6, 8-9; Jn 20:1-2, 11-18
Thursday:	Jer 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13; Ps 36:6-7ab, 8-11; Mt 13:10-17
Friday:	Jer 3:14-17; Jer 31:10-12abcd, 13; Mt 13:18-23
Saturday:	2 Cor 4:7-15; Ps 126:1bc-6; Mt 20:20-28
Sunday:	1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12; Ps 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-130; Rom 8:28-30; Mt 13:44-52 [44-46]

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Monday:	St. Apollinaris
Tuesday:	St. Lawrence of Brindisi
Wednesday:	St. Mary Magdalene
Thursday:	St. Bridget
Friday:	St. Sharbel Makhlūf
Saturday:	St. James

st. James the Greater

One of the Twelve Apostles, a witness of Christ's Transfiguration, and traditionally considered the first apostle to be martyred.

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Today's Readings

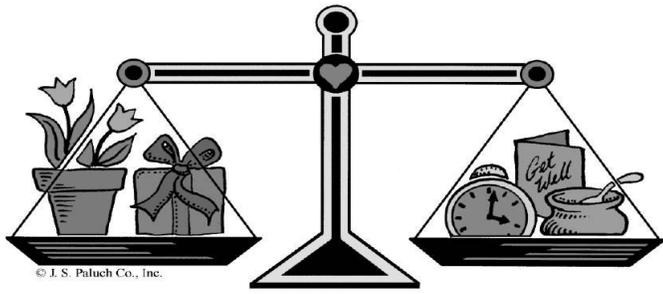
First Reading — You taught your people that those who are just must likewise be kind (Wisdom 12:13, 16-19).

Psalm — Lord, you are good and forgiving (Psalm 86).

Second Reading — The Spirit comes to aid us in our weakness (Romans 8:26-27).

Gospel — Jesus proposes parables to the crowds, teaching them of the reign of God (Matthew 13:24-43 [24-30]).

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Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time July 19, 2020

Those who are just must be kind.

—Wisdom 12:19

Treasures From Our Tradition

By the dawn of the fourteenth century, the sacrament of confirmation was ripe for a rescue, since vast numbers of the faithful never received it, and when it was celebrated, it was done so in isolation from baptism and Eucharist. A bishop named William Durandus set out to reclaim this liturgy, but he had a creative touch and added some things into the mix that had never been thought of before. One was a slap. Oddly, he replaced the kiss of peace at the end of confirmation with a slap on the cheek that endured to modern times. This “wake-up call” was related in his imagination to a custom in the military, wherein ceremonies of knighthood and investiture involved a symbolic wound as a sign of willingness to suffer.

Within every congregation today there are people who have memories of fretting through their confirmation liturgies, anxious to know how enthusiastic a slap the bishop would bestow. Durandus loved symbolism and had a reason for every ritual and practice, but his creative spin on the celebration shows how sadly adrift confirmation was from its anchorage in baptism, how far off-course from its home port of the eucharistic community.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

A God who judges with leniency and clemency, a Spirit groaning because we know not how to pray, a patient master waiting to separate wheat and weeds, a tiny seed growing into a great bush, and the miracle of yeast and flour! All of these images found in our readings today speak of the unexpected, the countercultural, and of the compassion and intimacy of our relationship with God. Many times we are afraid to come to God in prayer, or we may turn away from our God because of our weakness and sinfulness. We are not presented with a vengeful God who is waiting to smite us, but a God of infinite love and wisdom and patience who will show us the way. What an amazing gift this is!

We Need To Grow

We live in an instant world of microwaves and drive-throughs and a disposable society in which things quickly become obsolete, so today’s message is very strange. In all the readings today, and especially in the Gospel, we see transformation, but it is not something that happens overnight, nor does it take place without effort. We are met with parables of a patient and loving God who can see a positive outcome at the end and is willing to wait and nourish us and help us all get there. The sower’s seeds require a growth period and some careful sorting. To make the bread, one must knead it and wait patiently.

In planting a mustard seed, something so tiny yields great results, but not until after completing a period of dormancy and waiting.

What Is Our Leaven?

In our own growth, something usually spurs us on and calls us to change. For a young couple who find out they are expecting, this may be the impetus to “grow up” and straighten out their spending habits. For another, perhaps a heart attack or prolonged illness calls one to wake up and gives one a second chance at life. Losing a job or a spouse or surviving a car accident may mean it is time for a “do-over.” Isn’t it amazing to realize that we are blessed with a tender, loving God who will walk through all these changes in our lives, who is cajoling us into a better self? Here is a God who doesn’t pull the plug because of our sins, but is willing to wait and sort and “gather the wheat.” Let us be grateful for this gift of loving mercy. Recall the simple prayer found in Psalm 86:15–16: “You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, / slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity. / Turn toward me, and have pity on me; / give your strength to your servant.”

Today’s Readings: Wis 12:13, 16–19; Ps 86:5–6, 9–10, 15–16; Rom 8:26–27; Mt 13:24–43 [24–30]

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Sunday Readings
July 19, 2020
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1

Wis 12:13, 16–19

There is no god besides you who have the care of all,
that you need show you have not unjustly condemned.
For your might is the source of justice;
your mastery over all things makes you lenient to all.
For you show your might when the perfection
of your power is disbelieved;
and in those who know you, you rebuke temerity.
But though you are master of might,
you judge with clemency,
and with much lenience you govern us;
for power, whenever you will, attends you.
And you taught your people, by these deeds,
that those who are just must be kind;
and you gave your children good ground for hope
that you would permit repentance for their sins.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 86:5–6, 9–10, 15–16

R. (5a) Lord, you are good and forgiving.
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.
R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.
All the nations you have made shall come
and worship you, O LORD,
and glorify your name.
For you are great, and you do wondrous deeds;
you alone are God.
R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.
You, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity.
Turn toward me, and have pity on me;
give your strength to your servant.
R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

Reading 2

Rom 8:26–27

Brothers and sisters: The Spirit comes to the aid of our
weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought,
but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible
groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows what
is the intention of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the
holy ones according to God's will.

Gospel

Mt 13:24–43 or Mt 13:24–30

In the shorter form of the reading, the passages in
brackets are omitted.

Jesus proposed another parable to the crowds, saying:
“The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who
sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep
his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat,
and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the
weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder
came to him and said, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed
in your field? Where have the weeds come from?’ He
answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ His slaves said to
him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ He
replied, ‘No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot
the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until
harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters,
“First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for
burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’ ”

[He proposed another parable to them. “The kingdom of
heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and
sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet
when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a
large bush, and the ‘birds of the sky come and dwell in its
branches.’ ”

He spoke to them another parable. “The kingdom of
heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with
three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was
leavened.”

All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He
spoke to them only in parables, to fulfill what had been
said through the prophet:

I will open my mouth in parables,

I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation
of the world.

Then, dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. His
disciples approached him and said, “Explain to us the
parable of the weeds in the field.” He said in reply, “He
who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the
world, the good seed the children of the kingdom. The
weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who
sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age,
and the harvesters are angels. Just as weeds are collected
and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.
The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect
out of his kingdom all who cause others to sin and all
evildoers. They will throw them into the fiery furnace,
where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. Then
the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of
their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear.”]

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Prayer of the Faithful

The Holy Spirit intercedes for those in need, so let us pray for them today.

For all in the Church who tend the fields of faith
of those who believe, especially in places where
professing their faith puts them in danger,
let us pray to the Lord.

For judges, jurists, and others who render judgments
affecting lives in profound ways, that they may temper
justice with mercy,
let us pray to the Lord.

For those who have rejected the word of God, that
through our efforts they may return to God,
let us pray to the Lord.

For the grace and resolve to root out the weeds of
intolerance and prejudice in our own lives,
let us pray to the Lord.

For those who are without work, for those without health
care coverage, for all whose lives have been
upended as a result of the pandemic,
let us pray to the Lord.

For all those who are sick, for all who suffer from
COVID-19, and for all who have died,
especially N., N., and N.,
let us pray to the Lord.

For all the prayers that we hold in the silence
of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken,
let us pray to the Lord.

O God of the living,
through your Spirit you help us to pray as
we ought; hear these our prayers and
graciously grant them according to your will,
through Christ our Lord.

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Letters from Heaven



Start with the letter in the shaded square. Draw a path from letter to letter to complete the Biblical statement. Move one square at a time, up, down, right, left and diagonally until all letters are used once. Ignore any black squares.

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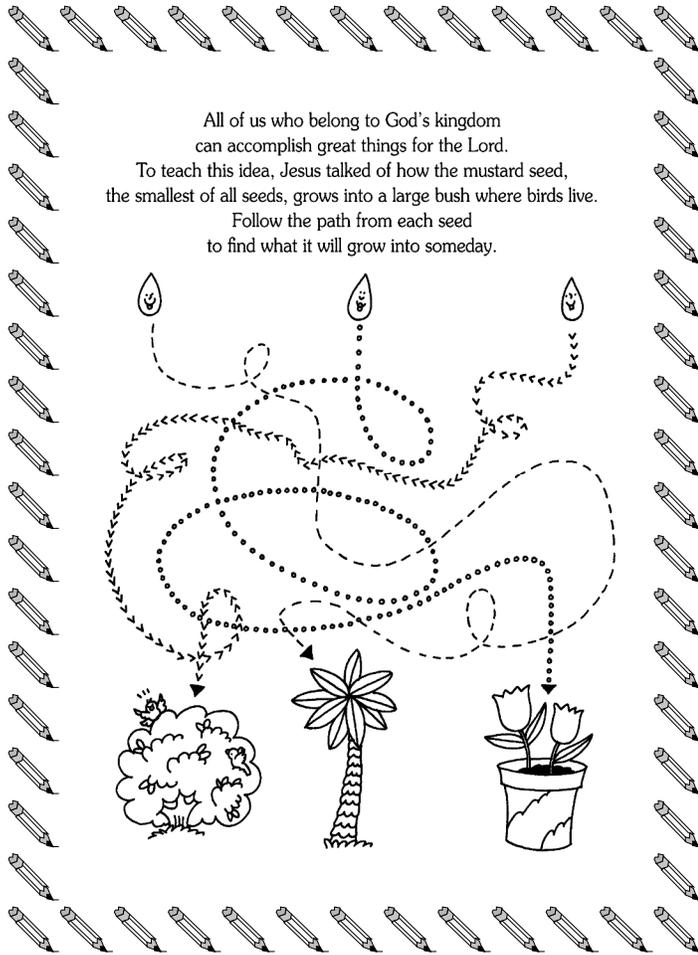
Jesus said, "Do to others as you would ...

H	M	D	O
E	T	T	O
H	■	E	Y
A	V	O	U

Excerpt from the NAB © 2010, 1991, 1970, CCD

H _____ .”

Answer: *have them do to you*



All of us who belong to God's kingdom can accomplish great things for the Lord. To teach this idea, Jesus talked of how the mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, grows into a large bush where birds live. Follow the path from each seed to find what it will grow into someday.

GOD'S WORD FOR CHILDREN!

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Jesus was telling a parable, "When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well."

Wis 12:13, 16-19 Ps 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16 Rom 8:26-27 Mt 13:24-43

Directions: Draw the crop with the weeds growing among the fruit.

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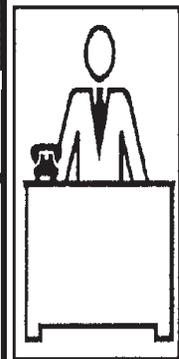
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