

OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA, MUMBLES
Reflection for
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 19, 2020
(May be used for Home Prayer Service)
Dominican Friars, Swansea

This reflection may be used during the home prayer service. Please see the home prayer service sheet for details.

A MERCIFUL GOD SAVES US IN LOVE

Today, Jesus once again uses the parable of the sower to lead us to the knowledge of God and of his kingdom. In doing this, he uses certain imageries which we can easily relate with. We may highlight these imageries as follows: the sower and the good seed, the enemy and the weeds, the field, the servants, the reapers, and the harvest. All these imageries have significance and they contribute to our knowledge of God. God is the sower and we are his good seeds. The Evil One is the enemy and the evil in the world is the weed. The field is the world, God's marvellous creation. The servants are those who desire an instant judgement on evil. The reapers are the angels, and the harvest is the last judgement.

God is good: The gospel reading relates that the sower planted good seeds in his field. With this, Christ teaches us that God is good and all he has created is very good (cf. Gen 1:31; Ps 34:8; Mk 10:18). Every good thing we enjoy comes from him (cf. Js 1:17). These are beautiful words of joy for us all. There are people who have been condemned by others that they are worthless. Jesus speaks to you today that you are of value to God (Mt 10:31). God has created you very good and so he cherishes you as his own very eyes (Ps 17:8). You are irreplaceable and you have got the inner powers and potentials to succeed in life.

God is ever awake: While all that God created is very good, we are very much aware that there is evil in our world. Christ says that the enemy came to sow the weed while people were asleep, not while the sower was asleep. Thus, the coming of evil into God's good creation was not beyond his knowledge. God is ever watchful of his creation (Ps 121:3-4). However, he was not the author of evil in the world because he is light and there is no darkness in him (1 Jn 1:5).

God is the patient judge: The evil that we experience in the world today continues to surprise many of us. It baffles us that there is injustice, poverty, and war in God's own world. The servants in the Gospel Reading were as

surprised as us about this unsettling human condition. As such, they wanted the immediate removal of the weeds from the field.

Similarly, there are people who want God to punish those they judge are responsible for the evil in the world. In this light of this, Jesus cautions that all judgements must be left to God who is the patient and perfect judge (cf. Js 4:11-12). Jesus teaches us that God uses his power to save and not to punish. It is not for any of us to condemn anyone or tag them as evil because we think they are evil. God does not think the way we humans think and act (Is 55:8-9).

God, who is merciful, is always giving us all the opportunity to repent because he does not want anyone to perish. Thus, St Peter writes that God is patient with us all and he desires that we live blameless lives (cf. 2 Pt 3:9). Likewise, St Paul expresses the goodness of God in teaching that God wants all peoples to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:4). Once again, while we should desire that evil be defeated in our world, we should leave all judgment about those who are involved in evil to the Lord.

God cares for his own: Many of us have experienced evil in the world in different forms. At such periods, we might have felt abandoned by the Good God. However, the First Reading (Wis 12:13.16-19) reassures us that God watches over his children when they are assailed by evil. For us who believe, God is able to bring out good from evil, and blessings from our disappointments.

At the end of time which Christ refers to as the harvest, evil will permanently be defeated. At that time, all those who thirst and hunger for justice will be satisfied (Mt 5:6). The good will eventually overcome evil. This is when the children of God shall be gathered in the heavenly kingdom where there shall be no more pain or sorrow caused by the evil in the world. May God free us from all evil and save us from all distress that we may live in tranquillity of body and soul till the day of his coming. Amen.