

**Weeds and Wheat**      Sixteenth Week in Ordinary Time      Saturday, July 27, 2019      Ex  
24:3-8;    **Mt 13:24-30**      Common of BVM      (If God wiped out the evil, there would be no  
freedom.)

**“Where have the weeds come from?”**

We have to admit that on the surface this is a pretty dumb question. “Where have the weeds come from?” Weeds are not planted, contrary to the assumption of the parable. Weeds exist because some plants are wild; **they sow themselves**. Their seed flows in the wind. That’s what makes weeds weeds. But that isn’t the point of the parable, where the weeds come from.

What the point of the parable is that **weeds and wheat have to grow together in this world**; in other words, **good and evil have to coexist**. Now people always believe that there should be more good and less evil, which is true. Now how are we going to get rid of the evil? What are we going to do about this? Well there is nothing we can do. That’s the point. **We have to just wait until the end, until the harvest. In this regard morality is a waiting game.**

Now in the Old Testament people believed that God punished the evil, but the question is well when, how quickly—after a minute, after an hour, after a day, after a week, after a month? How long does it take for God to punish the wicked? That became a big issue. People talk about this. Read the prophets. Ezekiel I believe said, no, “God wills the conversion of the wicked man.” Well that means that **he can’t punish them too quickly because by “punishing” they meant eliminate**, by and large. All the commandments of God the punishment was elimination, death by stoning. But they knew that they couldn’t really enforce the covenant perfectly because they just couldn’t know who is doing what. It was beyond their power. So they expected God to do it. But God said, well, I can’t do it; I can’t wipe out the evil. Why? Because **if God wiped out the evil, there would be no freedom**, because soon people would realize that they had no choice, and they

would be totally constrained, totally compelled, and they would become little robots. There would be no freedom.

**In order to have freedom good and evil have to coexist.** And life has to go on long enough for people who have made bad choices to regret those choices, **to recognize the evil they have sown. And this is what is called repentance. But repentance takes time.** For some people there is not enough time; they run out of time, even at the end of a long life they haven't yet repented. That's too bad, but it happens. Other people don't have a long life. By chance they end up without the opportunity. And all of this is supposed to be part of our world view. We are supposed to take it all into consideration and recognize **how important it is, not only to pursue the good, but to flee the evil in ourselves,** and to do our best to **encourage others to pursue the good,** and not only of the good in a narrow little sense, but in a broad sense of **the good for the entire creation.** So **God is very patient and God tolerates the good and the evil in the long duration of earthly life** that has already gone on for millions of years. **But there will be a harvest,** and we are supposed to keep that in mind.