

Text: Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

Theme: Weeds in the Wheat

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Holy Gospel of St. Matthew chapter thirteen verses twenty-four to thirty and thirty-six through forty-three.

In our text for today, we see a very familiar and homely parable from our Lord. It is a very simple story that anyone who has planted can relate to. Jesus talks about a farmer who has planted good wheat in the field and an enemy who hates the farmer has planted weeds in the midst of the wheat. What is the farmer to do? In his mercy, He waits until the time is right and deals with both together without harming the good seed. In this simple parable, this earthly story with a heavenly meaning, our Lord answers the question, why are there evil people within the world and what should we as Christians do about them?

Our Lord explains this parable for us. We know that the field is not the church but rather it is the world around us. Our Lord is not talking about how Christians should deal with other Christians. He is talking about how Christians should deal with unbelievers. Thus why it is important to note that we have two sowers and two different seeds within the same field. God is the One who sows the wheat. He sows good seed that abounds and brings forth good seed. The word of His Gospel brings forth believers, people who believe and trust in what He has done for us in Jesus Christ. His enemy, and therefore our enemy, the devil does not sow good seed. Rather, he sows bad seed, darnel. Something that looks like wheat when it is young and only able to be determined when fully grown and the harvest has come. These bad seeds want nothing to

do with God. They actively seek to do away with the things of God and poison the good things that come from Him, as we see in the garden of Eden where the devil poisons that which God says is “very good”. Their results are only negation and destruction. We see this all around us in the world today. This is why hatred and evil happen. Why evil people do evil things, because we live in the midst of a fallen, sin filled world. In this world, there is good seed and bad seed side by side.

So what are we to do about the evil people within the world? Many in our world would say that we need to be like the servants in the text. They ask to uproot the weeds, in order to destroy them and cast them out. They do so out of furor and zeal for their Lord with the best of intentions. They know their Master has scattered good seed and desire that it be all that remains. History has shown many times that we often fall into this trap both as a country and as a church. In our sinfulness and pride, we think that it is up to us as a nation to deal with all the evilness in the world. We are the world’s police force. It is up to us to eradicate the evil that we see by any means necessary. In terms of the church, it is up to her to use the sword against heretics, those bad seed within who lead people astray, either by the church herself or by her use of secular power. We see this play out in many of the world’s religions. They state ‘You believe differently than we do. You are not one of us therefore you must be killed.’ Even the Church has fallen into this trap at times, such as some of the atrocities that happened during the Crusades and Spanish Inquisition. The problem lies in the fact that we cannot tell the difference between good and evil. We cannot tell who is good and who is evil. There is no glaring sign that points to someone and states this one is a believer and this one is an unbeliever. On the outside, they look the same. There are no outward indicators as to who is good and who is evil, just as darnel and wheat looks similar. It is only when they are mature that the difference can be seen. It is only when lust,

desires, and thoughts gives way to words and deeds that we can tell the difference. That is why when it becomes evident, that we as a church use the law to convict people of their sins. We do so not to pass judgment over them but to bring them back in love. That is what the Master desires, that they be turned from their sins and repent. That is why the Master give us the response that He does. He states a resounding “No, leave them be.” It is not up to the servants to deal with them. Rather, they will be dealt with by the Master Himself. They will be dealt with but until then there is a time of grace for good and evil alike. There is still time for repentance.

This is repentance is brought about by the Master Himself. God does something that we would never expect. He takes us, who are weeds because of our sins. Surely, as St. Paul says, “all have sinned.’ We deserve to be bundled and burned. But God does not “burn” us. Rather, He makes us into wheat! That is why He sent His Son, Jesus, to be the sin-bearer for us. The One bundled and burnt in our stead. On the cross of Calvary, Jesus bundles our weediness, our sins together and places them upon Himself. He was burnt for us and rose uncharred to new life. He bears our sins so that as He went from death to life, we too may rise and by His power be changed from weeds to wheat. That instead of weeds, sons of the evil one, we are turned into wheat, His beloved Sons who produce good fruit.

This fact will be made evident. There will indeed be a sorting between the weeds and the wheat on the glorious Last Day. The Master, Our Lord Himself, does the sorting. He executes the Last and Final Judgement when all shall be revealed. The weeds for the evil that they have done, will be cast into everlasting punishment and destruction. The wheat, because of the good that Jesus has done for us, will enter into His barn, to live with Him forever and ever in blest communion.

A simple story? No, it is difficult for those who do not believe in Christ. Yes, it is simple, because it shows that Jesus alone provides the righteousness- the wheatness- for our eternal life with God.

In His name.

Amen.