

*Drawing by John R Hume,
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St Mary Magdalene's Church

7, Glenearn Road, Perth, PH2 0BD

Tel: 01738 336141

Rev. Bogdan Palka S.D.S. - Parish Administrator

Rev. Krzysztof Jablonski (07851 735590) - Permanent Deacon

PARISH MOTTO - 'THE BEST IS YET TO COME'

16th Sunday of the Year

23rd of July 2023

Dear Parishioners and Friends of our parish, we are so happy that you could join us today to celebrate the 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Have you ever said to yourself: If I were God, I would certainly do things differently. I would not let evil inflict damage on the world the way it has. I would not allow people to hurt and kill each other. I would stop anything bad from happening before it started. In my world only goodness would exist. Evil would be rooted out as soon as it started to grow.

Yes, if we were God instead of human, things would certainly be different. But we are not God. Evil still exists, and you and I still wonder why. Today's parable does not exactly answer the question, but it points to an attribute of God that tells us why the world at present is as God wants it to be, not as we want it to be. That attribute is forbearance which means patience, tolerance and being long suffering. Whenever we do something that is evil, God doesn't move in right away and strike us all dead. God is very patient.

One of the keys to a proper understanding of the Gospel parable of the wheat and the weeds is to read it in the light of the first reading. In that first reading from Wisdom we hear how forgiving and gracious our God is. "Although you are sovereign in strength, you judge with mildness, and with great forbearance you govern us...Through such works you have taught your people that the righteous must be kind."

And the Psalm proclaims: "...you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."


For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

O Lord, you are good and forgiving..

Gospel Acclamation

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us



What is the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares?

When we take these words into account, then the parable is not just a harsh condemnation of what is wrong. In the parable the householder allows the weed to grow along with the wheat, and there seems to be an unspoken word of hope--hope that some of the weed will actually turn into wheat. It is true that the Gospel does not explicitly say this, but the Church has chosen this first reading and psalm to help us interpret this Gospel. God's mercy and forgiveness is then today's message. The householder refuses to allow his slaves to separate the wheat from the weeds while they are still growing. This is a warning to the disciples not to attempt to anticipate the final judgment of God by an absolute exclusion of sinners from the kingdom. In its present stage it is composed of the good and the bad. The judgment of God alone will eliminate the sinful. Until then there must be patience and the preaching of repentance.

As long as we are alive, God has not finished working in us. We can change. Others can change. In other words, we can't take a person's life and then decree that that person can no longer change - that they must remain the way they are for the rest of their lives. If personal change were not possible every human relationship that is worth anything would have ended long ago because friendships and marriage make demands, great demands on our patience. In any real relationship the ability to stick through difficult times is absolutely necessary.

We can't give up on each other as soon as some imperfection appears in someone's personality. Where there is life, there is hope. We want perfection and are constantly disappointed. Rather than spending time and energy ripping out weeds, we should dedicate ourselves full-heartedly to nourishing the wheat. Evil fades in the presence of goodness. Darkness can best be eliminated not by cursing it, but by lighting one small candle. If our efforts accentuate the positive, the negative will diminish on its own.

Negative criticism has a way of taking energy away from what is good. There comes a point of diminishing returns when so much criticism becomes a kind of darkness itself, so that where the original intention may have been to correct some situation, the final outcome is that we create a new situation of hyper criticism that leads to nothing positive. When we feel affirmed enough in our good points, our bad points go into remission. When a lawn is healthy, the weeds have no place to go. The kingdom is growing and we are asked to be part of that growth.

Have a great week - stay well and enjoy the gifts and blessings God has given us. May God bless you always,

Fr Bogdan SDS

PRAYERS

Please pray for the repose
the soul of Maureen Frond
who died recently
and of all whose anniversaries
occur about this time.

**Eternal rest grant
unto their souls, O Lord.
May they rest in peace. Amen.**

Thank You

We thank you for your spectacular generosity. Your generous support of our Parish and your help with the needs of our community is greatly appreciated!

Collections:

Sunday 16th June – £622.00.

Second collection

Apostleship of the Sea – £148.00.

Shrine candles – £37.00.

Priest's musing

A troop of Boy Scouts was being used as "guinea pigs" in a test of emergency systems. A mock earthquake was staged, and the scouts impersonated wounded persons who were to be picked up and cared for by the emergency units.

One scout was supposed to lie on the ground and await his rescuers, but the first-aid people got behind schedule, and the scout lay "wounded" for several hours. When the first-aid squad arrived where the casualty was supposed to be, they found nothing but a brief note: "Have bled to death and gone home."

Bishop's Retiral Mass

Mass to mark the retiral of Bishop Stephen Robson
The Mass to mark Bishop Stephen's retiral has now been rescheduled. It will take place in St Andrews's Cathedral on Thursday 24 August at 7pm. An open invitation is extended to everyone.

Slow and steady wins the race

The ancient parable of the weeds highlights a very modern problem. It reminds us about the dangerous fast pace of modern life. It often deprives us from the opportunity to emotionally and spiritually be fully present in our decisions, actions and communications.

The hectic race to catch up with everything, address every challenge, solve every problem, express opinions, make decisions, say and do things are all too often driven by deep and dark fear. Fear of being left behind and losing control of opportunities and situations if we don't decide fast enough. Fear of being overtaken by our challenges if we do not act fast enough. The constant pressure to do, decide and act fast fractures the walls of souls and allows the dangerous and toxic noise and restlessness to spread inside, stealing our inner spiritual peace, stillness and joy in Christ.

Most importantly and dangerously, such a way of life prevents us from forming spiritual perspective and awareness of our decisions and actions. It effectively filters out reflection, prayer, and God himself out of our decision-making and problem-solving process. What if God had another plan for us? What if He had prepared another path for us to choose?

What if there was another decision to make, another way and time to act? The ability to control the speed of our thoughts and actions, emotional and mental reactions, and responses through the spiritual disciplines of prayer, reflection, silence, and stillness are perhaps the most critical and essential skills for modern life.

They create precious and life-changing opportunities for us to step into the divine

NORMAL MASS SCHEDULES

Monday
No public Mass

Tuesday – Saturday
9am

Friday
7pm (Polish)

Sunday
8.30am (Polish)
10am (English)
12noon (Polish)

CONFESSIONS

Saturday
9:30am (after Mass)
or call to make an appointment.

perspective of our lives and allow God to step into our reality, show us another way and path, another thing to say and do, another decision and choice to make, another time to act, another opportunity and possibility to embrace and follow.

SAINTS DAYS and SPECIAL OBSERVANCES THIS WEEK

Monday 24th July
16th Week of the Year

Tuesday 25th July
Feast of St James, apostle

Wednesday 26th July
Memorial of Sts. Joachim and Anne,
parents of Our Blessed Lady

Thursday 27th July
16th Week of the Year

Friday 28th July
16th Week of the Year

Saturday: 29th July
Memorial of SS Martha, Mary
and Lazarus

ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN HOSPITAL? DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS IN HOSPITAL?

Name _____ Hospital _____ Ward _____

Please complete/ tear off and hand it to Fr Bogdan after Mass