

Tuesday's Gospel: Weeds in the World and in our Heart

Gospel for Tuesday in the 17th
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 13:36-43*)

Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.”

He answered, “He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world, and the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; the weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the

enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”

Commentary

Today's Gospel passage offers our Lord's explanation of the parable of the wheat and the weeds. To understand it well, we first need to read the complete parable, that is, verses 24 to 30 of the same chapter of

Saint Matthew. These verses make clear the origin of the weeds: the one who sowed them was an enemy of the owner of the field.

This also explains the surprise of the servants who one day discovered the wheat field covered with harmful weeds. In the first weeks of their growth the two plants – the wheat and the weeds – look very much alike and are difficult to distinguish. Therefore the owner advises them to wait until the harvest, so as not to inadvertently pluck up the good wheat.

Our Lord makes clear that the field is the world and the enemy is the devil. Without falling into pessimism, we can say that we see this practically every day in many places. But this explanation does not exclude another more personal one, in which the field is our own soul. God sows his grace and the devil sows the

weeds there, the bad inclinations and desires we confront.

So what should we do? We need to react quickly, without waiting for the end of our life. This requires making good use of one of the practices of piety that the Church has always recommended: the examination of conscience.

And what resolution should we make? Perhaps to be more vigilant, because one of the causes of the abundance of weeds in the world is laziness and a lack of concern. As Saint Josemaría said in one of his homilies: “what a sad laziness, that sleepiness of yours!” (*Christ is Passing By*, no. 123).

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