

Reflection for 19th July 2020 – Year A – Trinity 6 – Matthew 13: 24 – 30, 36 – 43

These kingdom parables or stories are something we all need to hear at the moment. In their weird and funny way, they tell us so much about God and His kingdom and without hearing them we couldn't really put things into their context in the world we live in right now.

The story we hear this morning is one that Jesus tells after telling the story about the Sower – one you heard last Sunday. Jesus is still sitting in the boat at the lake. People have come to Jesus to be healed and fed. These huge crowds force Jesus to distance himself from them so that even those in the far back could hear what he had to say. Now the story is about weeds that are sowed into a mix of wheat. This story is kind of funny, it made people giggle, but it was also healing and feeding. If we were to hear it today, it would go something like this:

'A man sowed wheat seed in his field. Now, a neighbour, with whom this man and his family had had ongoing dispute for many generations, came in the middle of the night and sowed in weed seed. This malicious action came to daylight, when the weed had matured enough and was clearly recognisable from the wheat.

Everyone laughed at the man's bad luck – knowing perfectly well who might have done it. But to everyone's surprise, the man decides to allow the weed to grow alongside the wheat, until the harvest, despite of his servants protest. Actually, they were a bit disappointed, because they expected a revenge – after all, family disputes were a sort of an entertainment in those days – before all the modern gadgets.

However, the man had a cunning plan. He knew that the wheat was strong enough to survive the weeds competition for nutrition and

water. So he let the crops to grow together, and at the harvest time, he would collect the wheat grain for food and the weed for fuel.

The Kingdom of God is a bit like this story. God is resilient and refuses to turn to revenge at the face of opposition. Rather, patiently waits you people to turn to him... In its slow pace the visibility of his kingdom on earth becomes clearer and clearer.

Funny story, right? Not only funny, but also healing and feeding. This kingdom parable teach us about what the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, looks like under God's reign.

This is a story, how everything happens in God's time, not ours. We may wish everyday that God would sort somehow the messes that we are in, once and for all – both as individuals and as a world. Yet the reality is that we cannot force God. God's reign becomes reality – in God's time.

If we pause to think this, we know how true it is. We all have experiences in our lives that we wanted to force God to act right there, but of course it didn't happen. Yet, looking back, we know that how our lives changed since then, is actually the right thing.

In these days of Covid-19, uncertainty of so many things in our lives is just immense. Just like those first listeners by the lake Galilee came to be healed and fed, so it should be and can be to us too. This parable tells us today that the field – which is the world in God's plans – has everything mixed together, the bad and the good, and what is required of us is the patience and non-judgemental attitude of the workings of God around us.

It isn't God's desire to damage even one good wheat stalk of the harvest. That's why God isn't uprooting the weed, but leaves it to grow together with the wheat, knowing that both will have their roles to play in His Divine play.

Of course, acknowledging that God's reign has its own time frame, doesn't mean that we sit back and don't do anything. Firstly, we are to pray. We pray for this world of ours that is so messed up in so many levels. We pray for those who fight for the justice. We pray for the better understanding of our own role in Climate Change and even this Covid-19 Pandemic and its aftermath. We pray for our loved ones and all who suffer in body, mind and spirit. Secondly, we serve. We serve so that the love, mercy and justice of God can become visible in this world.

Jesus told this parable and others, so that we – you and me -would get a glimpse of God and of his reign. God is slowly but surely turning the upside-down world, right-side up. God is slowly but surely making the last first and the first last. God is slowly but surely healing each one of us from our blindness. He indeed is freeing us as the prisoners of worldliness and is reaching out to touch those who are wounded. And that is surely a Good News today.

Amen.