

16TH SUNDAY YEAR A ORDINARY TIME.

In today's parables, the weed with which the enemy over-seeded the wheat was probably darnel. Darnel in its early stage of growth is basically indistinguishable from the wheat plant. It is only when the heads of the plants appear that the weeds are recognized. If both grains are harvested together the flour will be spoiled. So the immediate response of the landowner's slaves was to uproot the weeds. But the landowner was astute and thought to wait confident in his belief that the wheat would survive and produce a good crop. Jesus later explains the meaning of this parable to His disciples. The Kingdom of God takes root in imperfect communities of both "wheat and weeds". The sower is Jesus, the good seeds are the children of the kingdom and the weeds are the children of the evil one. Jesus goes on to explain in further detail, how things will transpire up to the end of the world, and how His Angels will rid the world of all evil.

The issues portrayed in this aspect of today's gospel are as real for us today as they were in the time following Jesus ascension.

During the 1st century, as well as with us today, we see an imperfect world. The Kingdom of God, as established through Jesus is trying to overcome the evil in the world.

The evil comes in many disguises. As we see in Australia today there are many people, and institutions, hell bent on destroying the Christian culture on which this country was established. The ABC in particular is leading the charge, taking every opportunity to

bring us down. Andrew Bolt in the “West” has seen through their agendas he wrote in a recent article.

The Greens are leading the charge to formalize same sex marriage, another attempt to De-Christianise this country. The secularization of our lifestyle gains momentum every day.

And we are not on our own, look around the world today to see how the Christian church is constantly attacked and Christian minorities are being persecuted.

The “weeds” today are more plentiful than the “seeds”

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Still we must not despair, Jesus has said that He will be with us always and the Holy Spirit is at work as well. It may well be that the Christian Church and its influence will continue to decline for some time, but its my firm hope and belief that the small “mustard seed” of faith, firmly nourished by the prayers of the faithful, will continue to grow and eventually prevail.

The parable of the woman mixing the dough gives us an image of God, like the woman, with His hands in the flour, mixing in the leaven to create a perfect mix in society of all people, especially the poor, the outcasts the marginalized, who will be the active ingredients in the growth of the kingdom. Jesus, himself, was crucified and rose again to leaven and transform the world and He still mixes with us in all our weaknesses and sinfulness. This parable not only challenges us to expand our image of God as a woman, but also to reflect on the role of women in the growth of

the kingdom and to hope that there will be more leavening as men and women mix together in leadership roles.