

St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
Bridgeville, Delaware  
"The Little Church with a Big Heart"

A Prayer for the Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2020

**COLLECT**

ALMIGHTY GOD, the fountain of all wisdom, you know our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking: Have compassion on our weakness, and mercifully give us those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask; through the worthiness of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**FIRST READING – Isaiah 44:6-8**

THUS SAYS THE LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. Who is like me? Let them proclaim it, let them declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things to come? Let them tell us what is yet to be. Do not fear, or be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? You are my witnesses! Is there any god besides me? There is no other rock; I know not one..

**PSALM 86:11-17**

**(REFRAIN – *You, O Lord, are good and forgiving.*)**

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| <p>11 Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; *<br/>knit my heart to you that I may fear your Name.</p> <p>12 I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart, *<br/>and glorify your Name for evermore.</p> <p>13 For great is your love toward me; *<br/>you have delivered me from the nethermost Pit.</p> <p>14 The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent men seeks my life; *<br/>they have not set you before their eyes.</p> | <p>15 But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion, *<br/>slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.</p> <p>16 Turn to me and have mercy upon me; *<br/>give your strength to your servant; and save the child of your handmaid.</p> <p>17 Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed; *<br/>because you, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me.</p> |
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## **SECOND READING – Romans 8:12-25**

SO THEN, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ-- if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

## **THE GOSPEL – Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

ANOTHER PARABLE, Jesus put before the crowds: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

## **SERMON – Fr. Carl Mosley**

Grace be unto you, and peace. from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

One day last week I was talking to one of our parishioners and he mentioned that his grandson just graduated from high school. When I asked him what his grandson was going to do, he indicated that his grandson didn't have a clue what he wanted to do. Should he go to college, enter a trade school or just "get a job."

I told him I was thirty years old before I went into public accounting. It took me that long to figure out what profession I wanted to pursue and then it took me another thirty-two years before the Good Lord said, son you have to follow me and off I went into training as a Deacon and then seminary for the priesthood. One of these days I will figure out what I want to do with my life.

Many of us flounder when we are young as to the direction for our lives. We look and look and many of us try many things. Many times we fail. It takes time to see just what you want to do with your life.

One of things that I know I never wanted to do was own a restaurant, be a truck driver, or be a farmer. All are hard work, low pay, and in many cases are deemed not very rewarding.

Today's gospel talks about farming. Or does it?

Jesus is asking us if we are going to be weeds during our life or are we going to be fruitful. Are we going to grow in health and strength to be what God will harvest?

Last week I pointed out that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus is giving us another example that the folks of his time could relate to. It was an agrarian society and all knew how hard it was to plant, cultivate and then harvest the crops that were planted. The parable of the wheat and tares is one that we all have heard many times and when it is read again we wonder, what does that have to do with us in today's twenty-first century. How can we interpret that to our lives today?

We hear of the farmer gone into the fields and planting good seed. Well that sounds pretty logical. Most of us would not go to the feed store and knowingly buy bad seed to plant our crops. We would only want to buy the best for our fields. We then bring that good seed back to our farm and sow it within our fields. That good seed that has been planted, it is watered, it is cultivated, and it is allowed to grow as nature allows. We can stop there and relate that we live our lives being fed, taught, watered if you will, and allowed by the free will that God gives us to grow at our own pace, our own direction and own strength. Hopefully we have taken the right path to bring forth the fruit of the harvest.

Now, into the field comes the enemy sowing weeds. Weeds are anything that you don't have to plant, water or fertilize. Weeds just grow on their own and they try and take over the good, to choke out the good plants within the fields. (Just as a side note, what two vegetables are "perennial? The answer, rhubarb and asparagus)

The farmer is asked should the weeds be removed from the fields. He says no. Let them grow together and at the harvest they will be separated. The tares will be gathered at harvest time and thrown into the fire.

We can then sit back and say, oh yea, I get it now. The farmer is God, and the field is the world today. You and I are what has been sown in the field or in the world. Are we good seeds or are we weeds. That again is the question.

We live our lives and we are continually bombarded by other forces to turn away from the path by the evil one. To become choked out by the evil one and die in the fields. To die without hope or without the knowledge that life eternal is offered to each and every one of us. Do we let our lives only be watered when we are in church or reading the bible? Are we allowing the evil one to dictate what direction we are going in?

Not only are we being choked out but we are no longer productive. Are we living a life that helps others? Are we allowing God's spirit to work within our lives so that we can bear fruit in God's fields, this fragile globe we call earth?

Our lives are intertwined with others whose agenda sometimes appears to only divide and destroy. They all get mixed up in this crazy life. We are not called to condemn or separate others but we are called to unit and love each and every one that we meet along life's journey.

Our country is going through three great ordeals now that may very well be trying to separate us. To pluck the tares from the wheat. We see the Coronavirus and the controversy that brings with it folks getting sick and dying and wonder what is the best way to separate ourselves from this pandemic? The economy is hurting, folks and many are without jobs, without hope and many have no safety net to fall back on. Then we have the racial tension in our country and the world. People that have been marginalized for ions are trying once again to hope that everyone, everyone, realizes that all are equal and that all are created in God's image. We are all children of God.

So much is going on in the world and frankly, I don't have the answer. All I can try and do is to show the love of God each and every day, in what I say, in what I do, and how I live my life so that I do not become a weed.

Are you a weed or are you going to be fruitful in your life? It's up to you.

God bless,

Fr. Carl+