

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass Readings & Spiritual Leadership Guide

July 19, 2026 · Lectionary 106

Sunday Mass Readings

FIRST READING

Wisdom 12:13, 16–19

There is no god besides you who have the care of all, that you need show you have not unjustly condemned. For your might is the source of justice; your mastery over all things makes you lenient to all. For you show your might when the perfection of your power is disbelieved; and in those who know you, you rebuke temerity. But though you are master of might, you judge with clemency, and with much lenience you govern us; for power, whenever you will, attends you. And you taught your people, by these deeds, that those who are just must be kind; and you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 86:5–6, 9–10, 15–16

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

You, O LORD, are good and forgiving, abounding in kindness to all who call upon you. Hearken, O LORD, to my prayer and attend to the sound of my pleading.

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

All the nations you have made shall come and worship you, O LORD, and glorify your name. For you are great, and you do wondrous deeds; you alone are God.

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

You, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and fidelity. Turn toward me, and have pity on me; give your strength to your servant.

R. Lord, you are good and forgiving.

***Men Helping Men Step Up and Become Better Spiritual Leaders
by Following Christ and the Teachings of His Church***



SECOND READING

Romans 8:26–27

Brothers and sisters: The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings. And the one who searches hearts knows what is the intention of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the holy ones according to God's will.

GOSPEL

Matthew 13:24–43

Alleluia Verse: Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

Jesus proposed another parable to the crowds, saying: “The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder came to him and said, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ His slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ He replied, ‘No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, “First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.”’”

He proposed another parable to them. “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the ‘birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.’”

He spoke to them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened.”

All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He spoke to them only in parables, to fulfill what had been said through the prophet: I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation of the world.

Then, dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. His disciples approached him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” He said in reply, “He who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Just as 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 who cause others to sin and all evildoers. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear.”

All readings sourced from USCCB, Lectionary 106

***Men Helping Men Step Up and Become Better Spiritual Leaders
by Following Christ and the Teachings of His Church***



Reflection

This Sunday's readings draw us into a world where wheat and weeds grow side by side, where the Spirit groans within us, and where God's mercy flows like an inexhaustible river. The Book of Wisdom reveals a God who is master of all things and yet governs with lenience and clemency—a God who teaches by example that those who are just must also be kind. This is not permissiveness; it is the patience of one who sees the whole harvest and trusts the process.

In the Gospel, Jesus refuses to uproot the weeds prematurely. The Kingdom grows in mystery—like a mustard seed becoming a tree, like yeast hidden in flour. Paul completes the picture: even our prayer is incomplete, but the Spirit carries our unfinished groaning before God. Spiritual leaders drawn from these readings learn to hold complexity without panic, to distinguish what is theirs to do from what belongs to God, and to lead with the same mercy they have received.

Leadership Principles

PRINCIPLE 1

Lead with Mercy, Not Just Might

The Book of Wisdom reveals that God's power is expressed through clemency and leniency (Wis 12:16–18). Spiritual leaders resist the temptation to use authority as force. True strength is shown when we choose patience and kindness where harshness might seem more efficient.

PRINCIPLE 2

Resist the Urge to Uproot Prematurely

Jesus commands the servants not to pull up the weeds, lest they uproot the wheat (Mt 13:29). How often do we face the impulse to correct, remove, or eliminate problems too quickly. Wisdom sometimes means tolerating imperfection in order to protect what is good.

PRINCIPLE 3

Trust Small Beginnings

The mustard seed is the smallest of seeds, yet becomes the largest plant (Mt 13:31–32). Leaders can be discouraged by small starts, modest responses, or slow momentum. This parable calls us to honor and invest in what seems insignificant—because that is where the Kingdom often begins.

PRINCIPLE 4

Let the Spirit Carry What You Cannot

Paul reminds us that we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes for us (Rom 8:26). In leading our families, we cannot carry every burden with our own strength or wisdom. Surrendering what is beyond comprehension to the Spirit is not weakness—it is the deepest form of faithful leadership.

PRINCIPLE 5

Model the Mercy You Have Received

God gives “good ground for hope” and permits repentance for sins (Wis 12:19). We who have been shown mercy by God are called to extend that same mercy to others. A community shaped by forgiveness and second chances reflects the very character of God.

***Men Helping Men Step Up and Become Better Spiritual Leaders
by Following Christ and the Teachings of His Church***



Discussion Questions

QUESTION 1

The Book of Wisdom says God “taught your people that those who are just must be kind” (Wis 12:19). Where in your leadership have you prioritized being right over being kind? Have you ever led with seeking to understand, not to show that you’re right. What would it look like to hold both justice and mercy at the same time?

QUESTION 2

Jesus instructs the servants to let the wheat and weeds grow together (Mt 13:29–30). Is there a situation in your team, family, or community where you have been too quick to “pull up weeds”? What might patience and discernment look like there?

QUESTION 3

The mustard seed starts as the smallest of all seeds (Mt 13:31). What small, overlooked effort—in a person, a project, or a relationship—might God be asking you to invest in this week, even if results are not yet visible?

QUESTION 4

Paul says the Spirit “intercedes with inexpressible groanings” for us (Rom 8:26). Where do you feel the limits of your own prayer, wisdom, or leadership right now? What would it mean to entrust that situation entirely to the Spirit?

QUESTION 5

The yeast works quietly, hidden in the flour, until the whole batch is leavened (Mt 13:33). Where do you see quiet, hidden transformation happening in your community or organization that might not yet be recognized or celebrated?

***Men Helping Men Step Up and Become Better Spiritual Leaders
by Following Christ and the Teachings of His Church***



Closing Action

A concrete, personal response drawn from the readings this week:

This week, identify one area where you have been too quick to judge, correct, or remove. Choose to practice the patience of the householder: let things grow a little longer before intervening. At the same time, identify one small seed—a person, an idea, or an act of kindness—that deserves more investment. Water it. Trust the harvest to God (Mt 13:30).

“The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” — Matthew 13:43

Closing Prayer

Lord God, you govern the world with clemency and teach us that those who are just must be kind. Deliver us from the harshness of our own judgments. Help us to see others as you see them—not as weeds to be pulled, but as wheat still growing toward your light.

Jesus, patient Sower of the Kingdom, keep us from rushing the harvest. Give us the courage to trust small seeds, to celebrate hidden yeast, and to hold complexity without fear. Teach us to lead with the patience you modeled in every parable.

Holy Spirit, intercede for us in our weakness. Carry to the Father the prayers we cannot fully form, the longings we cannot fully name, and the groaning of those we lead. Make us instruments of mercy, patient as seeds, and faithful until the harvest. Amen.

“You, O LORD, are good and forgiving, abounding in kindness to all who call upon you.” — Psalm 86:5