

# NOTRE DAME PARISH

## 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

*While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off.*



Jesus used parables to challenge his audience to think. Jesus told this parable as an allegory of good and evil. Obviously, Jesus recognized good and evil lived together. But, when Jesus made that co-existence part of God's Kingdom, he must have

shocked his own followers. How could God allow such evil in the world? Shouldn't God act to save his people? Why did he delay?

*How has the experience of evil in your life helped you produce good? How has it challenged you?*

### MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, July 18 @ 4PM  
Ed McGrath by Sue & Richard Schulte

Sunday, July 19 @ 9:30AM  
Sinead Werner by Michael & Debbie Bergerson

Monday, July 20 @ 8AM  
Betty J. Napleton by Robert J. Napleton & Family

Tuesday, July 21 @ 8AM  
Bessie Maple by the Benish Family

Wednesday, July 22 @ 8AM  
Jolanda Kerelis by Daughters

Thursday, July 23 @ 8AM  
Leo & Phyllis Hill by Ellie & Frank Parkerson

Friday, July 24 @ 8AM  
John Benish, Sr. by Family

Saturday, July 25 @4PM  
Tom, Florence & young Tom Gately by Family

### Oremus – Let Us Pray

- For those infected by COVID-19, especially those in our own community
- For the protection and stamina of healthcare workers
- For our enemies and those who wish us harm
- For transparency and honesty in our government officials
- For farmers and harvesters who depend upon good crops
- For humility to recognize our strengths, abilities, and opportunities as gifts from God
- For educational leaders planning for the approaching school year
- For those most endangered by economic consequences of COVID-19

## The Misfits

If there is anything in the Bible that represents evil more than the devil, it is weeds. Weeds are used as a threat, a punishment, a weapon, a symbol of injustice, a sign to begin the harvest, and a fuel for hell. Weeds also serve as food for the wild animals that invade gardens.

But who decided that weeds, in and of themselves, are bad? Merriam-Webster defines a weed as “a plant that is not valued where it is growing and is usually of vigorous growth.” Oxford describes a weed as “a wild plant growing where it is not wanted and in competition with cultivated plants.” Whereas Ralph Waldo Emerson, the American essayist and poet, confidently defined a weed “as a

plant whose virtue has not yet been discovered!”

Most of us were raised to despise and dig out dandelions right down to their roots. Yet one can make a sweet wine from the petals, and the young leaves are nutritious, having more vitamins and minerals than most vegetables.

Because it is hard to keep fresh vegetables in the house, I recently subscribed to “The Misfit Market.” This company “rescues” vegetables and fruits that don’t meet supermarket standards, and they deliver them to my doorstep weekly. The vegetables and fruits may be misshapen, too small or too large, too plentiful in season, or

**Continued on page 4**



*“God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good.”*

**Genesis 1:31**

---

## July 22: Saint Mary Magdalene



*Cecilia A. Ranger is a Sister of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. This article first appeared in Global Sisters Report, a project of The National Catholic Reporter (July 22, 2019).*

Mary Magdalene has gotten a lot of bad press, it seems to me. Her image has been repeatedly “conscripted, contorted and contradicted.” Every July 22, on her feast day, I dread listening to homilies at church; in Scripture study groups, I shudder at the accusations against her.

According to the New Testament, who was Mary Magdalene?

Mary was a common name in New Testament times, held by a number of women mentioned in the canonical Gospels. The commonly received and traditional history of Mary Magdalene by Catholics and other Christians has been greatly affected by different interpretations about which biblical references actually refer to her beyond those where she is identified by the place name “Magdala.”

In the Gospels, several women come into the

**Continued on page 5**



## Part 1: MY GOD IS YOUNG

*In the coming weeks, I will be including a series of excerpts from one of my favorite books, **The God I Don't Believe In**, by Juan Arias. It was translated from the Spanish and published in English by the Saint Meinrad Abbey Press in 1974. It has been out of print for many years. The author is long deceased.*

*I have taken the editorial liberty of making references to God gender-neutral, and references to human beings gender-inclusive.*

### MY GOD IS YOUNG

My God has all the freshness of the dawn.  
 My God is birth.  
 Hence, God is every moment young.  
 In my God there are no seeds of death.  
 My God cannot grow old.  
 God is fullness, maturity, ever young.  
 God is a day without end.  
 God is continuous youth.

Therefore God is life.  
 To be young is to be like God.  
 Hence in the deepest part of men and women there  
     sleeps hidden a secret desire for youth.  
 Hence no one wants to grow old.  
 Hence anyone who walks with eyes fixed on the  
     coming twilight is always in pain.  
 Hence the old are mysteriously drawn toward the  
     young and feel a bittersweet, nostalgic envy of  
     them.  
 Youth is full of enthusiasm; it is the high tide of  
     giving, of dreaming, of hope, of beauty.  
 It is the "yes" of love.  
 It is easier for the young than for the old to give one's  
     whole life to a cause.  
 It is easier for the young person to burn himself or  
     herself out for an idea.  
 In the young, love still searches with all its original  
     power.

**Continued on next page**

**Continued from page 3**

Youth is not a passing phase, an apprenticeship, a novitiate.

It is the sublime moment for giving meaning to life; it is the time for great decisions; it is the peak of spontaneity.

It is the best time for hearing the voice of Christ when He says, "Those who do not risk their life shall lose it."

Hence, he or she alone is mature, vital and productive who, despite the inexorable course of time, preserves the freshness, the enthusiasm, the heroism, the spontaneity heroism, the spontaneity, and the vivacity of youth.

Those alone are Godlike who in their hearts refuse to stop being young.

Hence, my young God, my aggressively young God, my necessarily young God, my divinely young God, is accepted with difficulty by those who have lost their youth and with it their best values, and who try to get some sad consolation from the wretchedness of their defeat by making it seem like something good.

And they want my God to think as they do, feel as they do, look upon the world and everything in it through their own tired eyes.

And they call experience what is perhaps disillusionment.

And they call maturity what may simply be tiredness.

And they call prudence what is only conformity.

And they call productivity what is surely only desperate clinging to the last remnants of life.

But my God is always young.

And when someone grows old in heart, God goes on being young.

Hence my God is always nearest to those who are the youngest at any moment of history.

My God is young because God always hopes, because God always knows how to see the goodness which is hidden in things, because God knows how to pick up the almost imperceptible murmur of that life which buds forth everywhere so that the world may go on being young.

My young God knows that the final triumph is that of life.

My God does not have the defects of the young, but neither does my God have the vices of the old.

My God has the qualities of all people, but in my God everything is vibrantly young because my God is youth eternal, or better still, eternally young.

My God is the God who makes all things new, that is, young.

My God is the God who at the end of time will inaugurate the unending youth of the ages with the resurrection of all people.

**NEXT WEEK: My God is Disconcerting**

**Continued from page 2,  
Father Keith**

less in demand. Even so, they are fresh and delicious fruits and vegetables. Every delivery is like a surprise package.

Occasionally, I have had to "Google" the fruit or vegetable to identify it, and then search for recipes and directions to prepare it. It's quite an adventure, but I enjoy the surprise!

In the Gospel parable for this Sunday, it is not the weeds that are the culprits. It is "The Enemy." It is the Enemy's *motivation*. The Enemy uses something that is intrinsically good – a wild plant created by God – as a weapon of hatred.

The island of Lampedusa, Italy has been the unfortunate harbor of shipwrecked refugees. The bodies of children and adults have washed ashore, along with broken pieces of wood from the boats. Francesco Tuccio, a carpenter, has used his compassion to create a symbol of hope for each of the survivors – a Lampedusa cross made from the driftwood of these wrecks.

Pope Francis has frequently referred to our times as a "throwaway" society. Perhaps we should have a profound change of heart: not always to look at things or people for their conformity or "ideality," but for their virtue not yet discovered.

*Father Keith & Rocco*

## Continued from page 2

story of Jesus with great energy. There were Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus (Luke 38-42 and John 11). Also, we read about Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and Mary, the wife of Clopas.

Some women have erotic energy, like the three unnamed women who are expressly identified as sexual sinners, and they, too, have become part of the legend: the woman who wipes Jesus' feet with ointment, a Samaritan woman whom Jesus meets at a well and invites to seek her "husband," and an adulteress whom Pharisees haul before Jesus to see if he too will condemn her.

All of these Marys make it difficult to unravel the tapestry of Mary Magdalene from the knotted threads of legends about her that have been passed on from generation to generation.

In the four Gospels, Mary Magdalene is nearly always distinguished from other women named Mary by adding "Magdalene" to her name. Traditionally, this has been interpreted to mean she was from Magdala, a town thought to have been on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Luke 8:2 says she was actually "called Magdalene." In Hebrew, *Migdal* means "tower" or "fortress," and in Aramaic, "Magdala" also means "tower" or "elevated, great, magnificent."

The real Mary Magdalene of the Gospels actually fits well with the mission and identity of many socially committed people of today: She knew about service to others and engaging other disciples to "come and see" the human needs they might witness. She knew about inclusion; she knew about friendship; she knew about fidelity even when life looked desolate. For Mary Magdalene was a faithful friend of Jesus:

- as one who hung in— according to the Gospels — during Jesus' public ministry as one of his disciples (Luke 8:1-2, Mark 16:9);
- as a witness at the foot of the cross during the crucifixion (Matthew 27:56, Mark 15:40, John 19:25);
- as one of the women who brought spices to anoint Jesus at the burial site (Matthew 27:61, 28:1; Mark 16:1);

- as a witness who found the tomb empty after the Resurrection (Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:9, Luke 24, John 20:1);
- and as the first apostle to report the Resurrection to the rest of the disciples after Jesus' private appearance to her (John 20:16, Mark 16:9, Matthew 28:9).

Mary Magdalene was not afraid to be a faithful friend! No matter what the personal cost. The deep sacrificial friendship that Mary Magdalene had for Jesus has not only been intertwined with the many "Mary" stories of Christian history, but it has also been misinterpreted, calling her the secret wife of Jesus and claiming that Jesus (calling him Joseph) and Mary Magdalene (referred to as Aseneth) were parents of Ephraim and Manasseh.

Other speculative as well as rather sad fictions have been written about the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Sometimes we too judge close friendships harshly or at least suspiciously, so this may be understandable. Perhaps there is a lesson to learn here from Mary Magdalene's long-lasting friendship with Jesus. Deep and lasting spiritual friendships allow us to serve as disciples, to pray together, to witness suffering, to share whatever joys and sorrows life has to offer, and to rejoice at Resurrection! I have always loved Chapter 6:14-17 of the Book of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) on true friendship:

A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; the one who finds such, finds a treasure.

A faithful friend is beyond price; no sum can balance his [sic] worth.

A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy; such as he who fears God, finds

For the one who fears God behaves accordingly; and one's friend will be like oneself.

Maybe we need to remember often, and even imitate, the real Mary Magdalene, one who had the privilege of calling Jesus "friend."

Coloring Page: The Enemy who sowed weeds into the wheat field.  
Read Matthew 13:24-30.

