

Rev. Emmanuel-Garet Ifeakor
Wisdom 12: 13, 16-19
Romans 8: 26-27
Matthew 13: 24-43

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
EPIPHANY CATHOLIC CHURCH
Louisville KY, USA
July 19, 2026

Theme: If humans were God...

(Singing) "There is no one, there is no one like Jesus. There is no one, there is no one like Him. There is no one. There is no one like Jesus. There is no one. There is no one like Him." If humans were God. My dear brothers and sisters, I would like to invite you to reflect with me on this conditional clause because it begins with "If". First, all of us here are humans. We were created in the image of God. Because of the sin of our first parents, sin entered the world. Since then, all of us here, all humans have been struggling with distorted minds, inordinate desires, and concupiscence. Concupiscence is the tendency to sin. Despite the fact that sin entered the world through our first parents, we are also capable of doing good. We are capable of doing bad. It depends on your choice. So, everybody has that capability of being a good person, that is, to be a righteous person. You have the capability to be a wicked person. Everything depends on you; it depends on me. But one striking point about humans is, despite the fact that we are capable of being evil, whenever we are confronted with wicked people, or what we call evil people, or what we can call the people that do wrongdoing, our immediate response is very spontaneous, that is, condemnation and premature judgement. Our response is very immediate and spontaneous; premature judgment. Two examples will suffice here. One, when the woman was caught in adultery in John 8:3-11. They brought the woman to Jesus and said to Jesus, "Our law says we are going to stone her." Jesus confronted the crowd, "if you know that you have not sinned be the first to throw a stone on her." Everybody left. Another example is when David committed adultery with the wife of Uriah, Bathsheba. God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David. When Nathan came to David, he came to him narrating to him what God had said in the form of a parable. When Nathan finished, David said, "Bring that man, let us stone him." Not knowing that he was the man God was talking about. If humans were God.

Now, to the gospel we go. Jesus continues to teach us today using the parable of the wheat and weeds. The parable of wheat and weeds demonstrates God's patience, God's mercy, God's love and compassion to you and to me. It is all about the coexistence of evil and good. The coexistence of wicked people and good people.

As I said before, all of us are capable of doing good and doing bad. Being a righteous person or being a good person depends on you; it all depends on me. But in our capability to do good or not to do good; Jesus presented this parable to us. When you think in this world that everything is going to be good, you are deceiving yourself. Evil people or wicked people will continue to exist. The same applies to righteous people. So, when you visualize a world that is void of evil, it is utopia, that is, something that is not realizable in this world. We can't realize that everybody here must be good. No? We can not realize that everybody here is thinking alike. You cannot realize it. That is the essence of the parable of the wheat and the weeds. As I said before, despite the fact that humans are capable of being bad, whenever we are confronted with wicked people or bad people, our response is very spontaneous, that is, condemnation and premature judgement. In this sense, *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; Jesus said no. Leave wheat alongside weeds until they harvest.'* Explaining the parable Jesus says, "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".

Hence, the fact that God does not uproot the weeds (evil doers) and allows both to grow, does not mean he is sanctioning the weeds. So, when we become evil or wicked people, God is giving us time. That will take us to the first reading. The first reading says God is just. God cares for everybody. He condemns everybody justly, yet He is lenient. He judges with clemency. So, the fact that God allows the coexistence of the wicked and righteous doesn't mean that God is sanctioning the sins of the wicked. God is not enabling you to sin. God is not compromising your sin. What God is doing is what is called a deliberate act of grace, that is, to give me time, to give me a second chance in order for you and me to repent. Thus, at the end of the first reading it says, "and you gave your children good ground for hope that you would permit repentance for their sins". My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, in 2 Peter 3:9, it says, "The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance". Recall what He says in that parable that "Just as weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age". When will the harvest be? At the end of our life. Do you know the end of your life? Do I know the end of my life? I don't know. You don't know. Even when the doctor says you have two weeks to live, they don't give you the exact time. This is why it is so important that we continue to make concerted effort to be wheat (good people) and not to be weeds (evil doers), because you don't

know when God will call you. And I don't know when God will call me. The word of God says, at the end of our life, that is, at the harvest time, the angels will take all the weeds and bond them to be thrown into the fiery furnace. But "the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear".

We thank God for always giving us the grace and the time to repent. We thank God for giving us, what I may call, the waiting time or the waiting period for us to come back to him. Don't take the waiting period of God to be weakness on the part of God. God is giving us a deliberate act of grace to warn us, to lure us to Himself. That is the meaning of the parable of the coexistence of wheat and weeds; the coexistence of the wicked and the righteous. In this sense also we would want to learn from God not to pass premature judgment on people. When we see or encounter those who are weak and tolerate them; it doesn't mean that we are sanctioning the wrong they are doing. God loves everyone here. But God doesn't like our wicked acts. In the same line, we love everybody, but we don't love the wrongdoing they do. Thus, we should show some act of mercy to the wicked like God while praying for their repentance instead of premature judgement or outright condemnation. That is why we say, if humans were God. Some people here if they were asked could you name one person that you might think would go to hell?" Some people would boldly name one person. Or if asked, can you name one person that is a weed? Some people can boldly do that. They can have the effrontery to say, "Oh, I know; he/she is condemned." It does not work like that because at the end, the condemnation and approval will only be done by God. Therefore, I want to encourage you to be patient with other people as God is patient with you. Imitation of Christ says, "be patient in bearing people's defects and infirmities for you have many in yourself that others suffer from you" (Imitation of Christ, Book 1, Chap 16; 2). Besides, St. Francis de Sales says, "Learn also be patient with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections but constantly set about remedying them, everyday begin anew". So, let us continue to work on ourselves. If humans were God. (singing) "There is no one, there is no one like Jesus." He gives us a chance. He gives us a waiting time. (singing) "There is no one. There is no one like Him." When He gives us this time, He doesn't sanction our sin. He doesn't enable us to sin. He wants to call you to Himself. There is no one. (singing) "There is no one like Jesus. There is no one. There is no one like Him."