

## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> Reflection

### **Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43 The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat**

He put before them another parable: "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." '

### **Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds**

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!

Seeds and weeds – have been the themes for the two middle Sundays of July this year. Last week it was the parable of the sower and this week the parable of the weeds amongst the wheat.

How do you see yourself? Do you see yourself as a seed or a weed? Why?

What is a weed? It is a plant growing in its comfortable environment where someone else does not want it to grow.

Who says what is weed and what is a good plant?

I have just been watching Countryfile from the 12<sup>th</sup> July about a project in Kent to release European Bison into the forest of Blean near Canterbury – one of my favourite cities.

The bison are being introduced to repair the damage to the 1300-year-old woodland which human intervention caused in the 1960's. During the sixties it was decided that this ancient woodland could become an area for cultivating wood as a commercial product. The trees planted were non-native and have over the last 50 – 60 years been destroying the traditional woodland plants.

The bison have been (re)introduced into woodland where many years ago they would have wandered around. As a natural, but reintroduced, grazer they will chew and rub against trees, kill some of those trees and plants, churn up the ground and enable more of the traditional native plants and trees to take root and flourish. In the 60's the introduced trees were seen as a good thing, now they are seen as a menace.

We have times when we judge people as weeds and might want to have them "destroyed" but when we let them grow they can become beautiful flourishing plants giving benefit and joy to those around. In the news this week there was mentioned a project in Glasgow where the police were working alongside former offenders to transform the lives of youngsters who were getting into trouble; it is working.

On the other hand there are times when something may look good but when allowed to grow crushes the life out of others around. Last week there was mentioned the very-respectable looking people living in the communities who were the "Mr and Mrs Big's" of the criminal network found through infiltrating the "underworld" communication system. To their neighbours they looked good people but were damaging the lives of others.

The judgement of weeds and seed in the Kingdom is not for us to decide but it is in the hands of God.

Am I a seed or a weed? I pray, and trust in Jesus, that I am seen as a seed and may help others flourish.