

St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church
Moore Street, Adelaide

Reflection for the 7th Sunday after Pentecost
The Weeds and the Wheat

Possibly one of our most common mistakes and sins is our strong tendency to judge other people. The parable before us this week is about the Weeds—darnel, a dangerous, intoxicating grass—and the Wheat. One of Jesus' purposes in telling this parable is to encourage us to be more inclusive in our thinking and in our attitudes to others.

The weeds begin to appear among the wheat in field. The advice given is to let the weeds be in the field – allow them to flourish along with the wheat then at harvest time the two will be sorted out. As Jesus explains the parable is about good and evil co-existing in the world. It is not always easy to tell the difference between darnel and wheat because their roots may be intertwined beneath the surface of the soil.

Possibly this is a parable about the power of the Kingdom of God. In other parables Jesus explains how yeast transforms dough to make a loaf of scrumptious bread. So all people will have it in them to be changed by God. This is remarkably inclusive talk by Jesus. We are so inclined to judge people of whom we disapprove and we consign them to wherever for good—get them out of the way or throw the key away.

Jesus tells that it is much more important for us to get on with our mission in life than to waste time and energy judging other people. It is appallingly daunting to think of the damage which has been done by Christian people over the years. They have succumbed to the temptation to be judgemental.

Most people throughout the world long for the same things, many of which we are blessed in Australia. Before we judge people who try to migrate to Australia, for example, we can try to imagine being in their shoes, facing their dire problems and underneath it all longing to live peaceably with opportunity—say, in Australia. It must be an enormous challenge to leave one's home and friends to live elsewhere. Just as children and parents can be tearful when children leave home to live elsewhere—be it suburb, another state or another country. These tears are shed as people leave their homes and friends in other countries too. We share with them immense difficulties and challenges in life.

This parable counsels patience when dealing with other people we dislike. Be tolerant and patient as the owner is with the weeds and wheat in his field. In time wonderful change and development can happen.

Fr Graeme Kaines