

Pastor's Letter

July 19, 2026 – 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

I consider myself a pretty good judge of character. More often than not I can tell if a person is trustworthy or dishonest, but I have been fooled from time to time. It's hard to read another person's heart. It's impossible to read their soul.

In our Gospel reading for today Jesus tells the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds. A man has both growing in his field. He tells his workers to leave them until the harvest because he doesn't want to uproot the wheat by mistake in trying to eradicate the weeds. At the harvest everything will be sorted out, the weeds for burning, the wheat into the barn.

Jesus says this is what the kingdom of heaven is like. There are good people and there are bad people inside and outside the church and we can't always tell which is which, as much as we might like to. That seems to be a major preoccupation for us, deciding who is in and who is out. But that's not up to us and we don't have the tools or insight to make that call. We can look at people's actions and judge if they are good or bad, but we can't always know their intentions. And even if we do have some idea of what their character is like now, who knows if they will have a change of heart in the future. The dirty rotten scoundrel today might become a saint tomorrow and vice versa. To judge a bad person now and cut them off might be uprooting a future saint. And the conflict and the turmoil that we create in the church by our judgmentalism may keep others from joining us in trying to grow in faith, hope, and love.

Maybe it would be more productive if we focused on becoming better people ourselves and helping each other be better rather than condemning each other. Someday harvest time will come and the Lord of the Harvest, the only one able to judge rightly and justly, will put each of us in our proper place. Until then, let's concentrate on tending our own gardens and encouraging each other so that we can produce an abundant yield of holiness for God.

Blessings,

Fr. Scott

