

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 23, 2023

“It is [Christ] whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.”

— *Colossians 1:28b*

A MINDSET OF SERVICE

There’s a lot of traveling, delivering, and visiting going on in our readings today. In Genesis Abraham cares for the needs of three mysterious travelers. The psalm responds, celebrating the kind of righteousness that Abraham practices. Then, in his letter to the Colossians, Saint Paul describes his own ministry as almost like a delivery service: he, God’s steward, brings the word of God to their community. Finally, Luke’s Gospel shares the well-known story of Mary and Martha, and the different ways they welcome Jesus into their home. Amid all this coming and going, we are invited to pay attention to the ways we tend to the needs of others. Each of us can ask, *How am I present to God and others in my life?* Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

TODAY’S READINGS

First Reading — Abraham shows hospitality to three visitors (Genesis 18:1-10a).

Psalm — He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord (Psalm 15).

Second Reading — The mystery hidden from generations past has been manifested; it is Christ in you, the hope for glory (Colossians 1:24-28).

Gospel — Jesus converses with Martha and Mary about service and contemplation (Luke 10:38-42).

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Monday: St. Sharbel Makhluf

Tuesday: St. James

Wednesday: Sts. Joachim and Anne

Saturday: St. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus

~~~~~PRAYER CORNER~~~~~

PRAYER FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

O gentle Heart of Jesus, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in Purgatory, have mercy on them. Be not severe in Your judgments, but let some drops of Your Precious Blood fall upon the devouring flames. And, Merciful Savior, send Your angels to conduct them to a place of refreshment, light and peace. Amen

REFLECTION

The sixteenth Sunday reading tells us about a very patient and compassionate God who is hopeful that the so-called “weeds” among us will be converted. We should not be in a hurry to eliminate such weed elements from the Church, or society, or the family, based on unwarranted and hasty judgment. The first reading from the book of Genesis, gives us a picture of a merciful and patient God rather than the strict, angry, and judging God. The second reading reminds us that the Spirit of God goes on empowering us in our weakness, and hence, we should be patient with ourselves. Finally, the long form of today’s Gospel contains the parable of the wheat and the weeds, an agriculture parable with allegoric interpretation. Through this parable, Jesus assures us that we are the field as well plants of God. We are the people God rests His hopes upon and the people in whom He plants good seed. We are the congregation God anoints with the Holy Spirit.

In today’s parable, Jesus presents a wise and patient God who allows the good and the evil to coexist in the world., so that the evil ones may come to conversion before their time ends and God’s punishment. “Let the wheat and the weeds (darnel) grow together till the harvest time.” God gives all of us sinners ample time to repent, and, with His grace, change our lives. God calmly recognizes that there is evil in the world, but He sees that evil is not an excuse for the good people to do bad things. God people should remain as good always. In all circumstances good must be done and evil must be avoided. Through the parable of the wheat and the weeds in today’s gospel, Jesus calls us to be patient with those who fail, or seem to fail, to meet the high ethical standard expected of a Christian. The parable also encourages us, when we discover, sin and weakness within us, we need to open ourselves more and more to the unfailing mercy and the unconditional love of God.

A PIECE OF WISDOM

If God answers your prayer, He is increasing your **FAITH**.
If He delays, He is increasing your **PATIENCE**.

If He doesn’t answer,

He has something **BETTER FOR YOU**.

