

Tuesday, July 28, 2026 -- Tuesday of the 17th week

Jeremiah 14:17-22; Matt 13:35-43

Homily

In early monastic literature, especially Pachômienne literature, we find a conception of the ascetic life that undoubtedly finds its inspiration in the Gospel we have just read. According to this view, God sowed all the fruits of the Spirit in us at the moment of our birth. He created us in His own image and, according to the beautiful figure in the Book of Genesis, put His own Breath of Life within us. But the Enemy or Devil is always on the lookout to snatch away these fruits of the Spirit and sow in their place the fruits of evil. The fruits of the Spirit are virtues, and the fruits of evil are vices.

The world in which we live is the setting for the great eschatological battle between the Powers of Light and the Powers of Darkness, between the forces of Life and Death, between Good and Evil. We believers know the outcome of this battle, which Christ has already won, but we don't know how long it will be before the final victory comes. That's why, when the first monks went deep into the deserts of Egypt, it wasn't to enjoy quiet solitude, but rather to fight with Christ against the forces of evil, in order to hasten the full realization of Christ's Victory over Evil.

This struggle is ours, each and every one of us. Our hearts are also the battlefield between the forces of evil and good. We shouldn't be surprised if chaff appears everywhere in our hearts - that is, if temptations of all kinds appear, whether of pride, ambition, anger or sensuality. As long as we don't allow the Enemy to pluck from our hearts the good grain, i.e. the fruits of the Spirit, that is, as long as we don't give in to these temptations, they are powerless against us.

Let's ask the Lord for the Wisdom to discern the good grain and watch over its growth. And let us allow the Lord to act when he wants to work the field of our lives through trials, in order to make the soil more fertile. As for the tares, let's not even pay them any attention, because they need our attention to take root.

The field Jesus speaks of in the Parable is the song of our heart, but it's also the song of our community, of the Church, of the Society around us. Let's not obsess over the chaff, or what we consider to be chaff. Let's keep our eyes fixed on Christ and on the fruits of the Spirit he has sown in us, especially that of *charity*, in which all the

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others are found.

Armand Veilleux