Sixteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time – 19th July 2020

There is a great freedom in St Paul's opening sentence, 'The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness.' St Paul, more than anyone, knows about weakness and about struggles to get our lives aligned with Jesus Christ and His Kingdom, for he too admits that he wishes he could do the good he wanted to and not do the bad that he does do (paraphrasing Romans 7:15-20). Yes we have weaknesses, but this is not a bar to Christ's love and grace, but rather an opportunity for Christ to impact upon our lives with His infinite Love and Mercy; for as St Paul tells us, 'where sin increases, Grace abounds all the more,' (Romans 5:20) and that in the power of Christ, 'when I am weak then I am strong,' (2 Corinthians 12:10) for then, there is an awakening to our need for Christ in our lives when we are being attacked for our love of Him and or when we are feeling particularly vulnerable because of our weaknesses to sin and temptation.

Why else would God become Incarnate if not to come into our weak and broken humanity, so to raise us up out of such struggles with ourselves and each other – if we were perfect then surely we would not have any need for God! Our God is a God of Grace, Salvation and Redemption. God knows we are weak, and as the Gospel parable of the wheat and the darnel, preached by Jesus, reminds us, God can easily hold this tension of our good bits and not so good bits together with in His Kingdom.

Indeed, it is often said that the best spiritual growth sprouts up from these times of tension within our lives, for it is then that we are invited in the power of the Spirit and Christ, to really and truthfully reflect and ponder on the struggles in our innermost being – that place where we may well have closed the door on our hurts and wounds. On our spiritual journey into holiness, we are called to open the door and let the Healer of all hurts and wounds in, in order for Him to pour His salve, His healing ointment (or as we would more commonly say, His Salvation) – into those areas that we have for too many years protected only in a human or worldly way.

God is in no rush – in a worldly sense – for He is outside of time as it were, and He is aware of our level of ability and the speed of progress that we can manage within our spiritual growth or along our spiritual journey. We are told that Grace builds on our nature, so we can be reassured that we are in the Hands of one who knows us perfectly, and as the perfect mentor Christ slowly helps and allows us to get to know ourselves perfectly, with no judgement or shame attached, but just the infinite desire and will to get us to a point of Freedom and Truth.

Christ is Healer, Saviour and Redeemer, so as we walk through the field of our life gazing at the wheat and darnel planted there, we know that with our growing pains we are in the Presence of the One Person who is able to reassure us that all will be well, for He knows about our tensions in life and He is the answer to them all. Let us not be in too much of a rush to weed too early or to rush to the finish too early, for it is all too easy to make further mistakes or miss things out in the blinkered rush to the end. Let us do just as Christ has asked us to do – to walk and ponder through our lives and let His Love, Wisdom and weeding occur as and when necessary, and in His time not ours – for that is the real tension: am I living in Kingdom Time or worldly time when it comes to Healing, Salvation and Redemption?

We may think that we do not have too much to offer to the building of the Kingdom of God – I guess God would disagree, for why else would he have created you and me? Yes, let us be spiritually humble enough to recognise that we are tiny in the Kingdom of God, but as Jesus says in the other parables of today, let us also recognise that our tininess can be use by God as He journeys with us in our spiritual journey, tensions and all, to allow us to become effective in His Kingdom in how we welcome and influence others around

us. We too in our weakness can bring others on in their spiritual journey if we have truly allowed Christ to walk with us in the field of our lives.