

## **FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

(Mt 13: 24-30)

(Poem Vol. 2, pp. 211-2; Gospel Vol. 3, pp. 179-80)

***(Jesus is visiting the home of Elias, a new disciple. Word spreads quickly through the town that Jesus is there, and the crowds gather in Elias' little kitchen garden, asking Jesus to speak to them. Although He is not inclined to do so - sad as He is because of the recent capture of John the Baptist - Jesus yields, and in the shade of some nearby trees, He tells the parable of the Wheat and Darnel saying:)***

"As we are still in the lovely season when the corn bursts into ears, I wish to tell you a parable taken from the corn. Listen.

The Kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while the man and his servants were asleep, his enemy came and sowed darnel seeds among the wheat and went away. At first no one noticed anything. Winter came with rain and frost, the end of the month of Tebeth came and the corn sprouted. The tiny little green leaves which had just come up, looked all alike in their innocent early days. The months of Shebat and Adar came and the plants grew and the spikes seeded. They then saw that it was not all wheat, and that there was also darnel, twisted with its thin strong bearbines round the corn stalks.

The servants of the master went to his house and said: "Lord, what seed did you sow? Was it not selected seed, free from every other seed?"

"It was certainly so. I picked all the grains and they were all of the same quality. I would have noticed any other seed".

"If so, why has so much darnel grown among your corn?"

The landlord became pensive and said: "Some enemy has done that to harm me".

The servants then asked: "Do you want us to go into the field and free the corn from the darnel, weeding it out patiently? Tell us and we will do it".

But the master said: "No. Because you might weed out also the corn and almost certainly you would damage the ears which are still tender. Let them both grow till the harvest. Then I will say to the reapers: 'Cut everything together, but before tying the sheaves, since the bearbines of the darnel are withered and friable, whereas the closed ears are stronger and harder, pick the darnel from the wheat and tie it into separate bundles. You will burn them and they will fertilize the soil. Take instead the good corn into the granaries and it will be used to bake good bread, to the great shame of my enemy who will have gained only to become despicable to God because of his envious malice' ".

Consider now how often and how plentifully the Enemy sows in your hearts. And you must understand that it is necessary to watch patiently and constantly to ensure that little darnel is mixed with the chosen wheat. The fate of the darnel is to be burnt. Do you wish to be burnt or to become citizens of the Kingdom? You say that you want to become citizens of the Kingdom. Well, endeavour to be so. The good God gives you the Word. The enemy is vigilant to make it harmful, because the flour of wheat if mixed with the flour of darnel makes a bitter bread, which is harmful to the stomach. If there is darnel in your souls, pick it with good will and throw it away, so that you may not be unworthy of God.

Go, My children. Peace be with you.”