

NEWSLETTER

16th Sunday in
Ordinary Time**'man who sowed good seed in his field'**

I don't know about you? I have to confess that, I have made a poor opinion of those who have come to me only to be proved that I was completely wrong. Indeed, there have been times when I have judged someone badly and later find out that my judgment was incorrect? It has taken me a while to realise that when I judge others I might not have the full picture and may not be fair in my judgment. The darnel (weeds) that an enemy sowed among the wheat in our parable in its early growth looks similar to the wheat and it's difficult to discern which is wheat and which is the darnel. God on the other hand sees the bigger picture and not my puny judgments! God is much more patient and merciful than I am.

I am reminded of John Mary Vianney who was regarded as darnel but became wheat. He is the most famous Pastor or Parish Priest in France he later became the Cure of Ars. He was the dunce in his class and found it difficult to learn Latin. In 1812 he went to the preparatory seminary at Verrieres and was the bottom of his class. Hoping for a better result they examined him again in French but he was still the bottom of his class. His studies in theology went ever so badly in the seminary in Lyons they asked him to leave the seminary after five months. He was taught theology privately in French by M. Bailey, the priest at Ecully, and was ordained in 1815. Three years later he was appointed to Ars. reports of his holiness spread and people came to hear him from the surrounding parishes. The one who was thought of as darnel turned out to be the finest wheat and was sought after by the faithful that even special public transport and ticket offices had to be laid on. He is the patron Saint of Priests.

If by any chance you or I are tempted to judge others negatively we need to do two things:

- 1) Think of the love of God for others. Even if we cannot see God's love in others at this moment, could we see Jesus crucified in them?
- 2) If we fall into forming negative opinions of others we should not allow such negative opinions to interfere in how we treat others. In our parable, the advice is given not to pull the darnel before harvest i.e. not to let our opinions interfere in how we treat others.
- 3) The parable reminds us not to play God and judge people but instead allow judgment to God. God is much more merciful and patient than we are. Instead, let's concentrate on removing the darnel from our eyes than judging others. So, what are we doing to remove the darnel from our lives?

What are we doing to remove the darnel from our lives? When we are ill we consult our doctor who after examination writes a prescription or calls for further tests. When we have darnel in our life we need a spiritual prescription. The spiritual prescription is; Try to pray as much as possible, read the Bible, try and read the Gospel either Mark or Luke, try to attend daily Mass.

Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation as often as possible. In this sacrament, we receive not just forgiveness for our sins but the grace to live the Christian life. *Fr. Christopher*

SUMMER BREAK

Many of you will be going on your Summer Break. It's a well earned after the lockdown. Do Have a wonderful Summer and I shall see you when I return please God from my break. Stay safe and God bless you all. *Fr. Christopher*

MASS INTENTIONS**July 18, 2020**6pm - Ints of Glenys
& Lin**June 19, 2020**9am—People of the Parish
11am— Priests
of the Diocese

For weekday mass intentions please, see the notice board on the left hand side of the main door of the church.

Confession

**Spiritual
Communion**

Jesus!

My God and my All
my soul longs for thee.My heart yearns to
receive thee inHoly Communion, come, O
Lord.Bread of heaven and food of
angels to nourish my soul
heal my body and to rejoice
my heartcome most lovable friend of
my soul,to inflame me with such love
that I may never again be
ever separated from thee.

Amen

It is with sadness we inform
you about the death of

Mr Alban Walters.

Unfortunately we do not
have any details about the
funeral.

Readings for this & next Sunday

1st Reading; Wisdom 12:13:16-19
Psalm 85: 5-6, 9-10, 15-16 responsive v 5
2nd Reading - Romans 8: 26-27
Gospel – Mathew 13; 24-43

1st Reading; King 3:5, 7-12
Psalm 118: 57, 72, 76-77, 127-130 responsive v 97
2nd Reading - Romans 8: 28-30
Gospel – Mathew 13; 44-52

“There are many ways to receive the Word of God. We may do so like a path, where birds immediately come and eat the seeds. This would be distraction, a great danger of our time. Beset by lots of small talk, by many ideologies, by continuous opportunities to be distracted inside and outside the home... We may receive the Word of God like rocky ground, with little soil. There the seeds spring up quickly, but they soon wither away, because they are unable to sink roots to any depth. This is the image of those who receive the Word of God with momentary enthusiasm... We may receive the Word of God like ground where thorny bushes grow. And the thorns are the deceit of wealth, of success, of worldly concerns... Lastly - the fourth possibility - we may receive it like good soil. Here, and only here the seed takes root and bears fruit. The seed fallen upon this fertile soil represents those who hear the Word, embrace it, safeguard it in their heart and put it into practice in everyday life.”

Pope Francis

“The Parable of the Sower is somewhat the 'mother' of all parables, because it speaks about listening to the Word. It reminds us that the Word of God is a seed which in itself is fruitful and effective; and God scatters it everywhere, paying no mind to waste. Such is the heart of God! Each one of us is ground on which the seed of the Word falls; no one is excluded! The Word is given to each one of us. We can ask ourselves: what type of terrain am I? Do I resemble the path, the rocky ground, the bramble bush? But, if we want, we can become good soil, ploughed and carefully cultivated, to help ripen the seed of the Word. It is already present in our heart, but making it fruitful depends on us; it depends on the embrace that we reserve for this seed.”

Pope Francis

Often one is distracted by too many interests, by too many enticements, and it is difficult to distinguish, among the many voices and many words, that of the Lord, the only one that makes us free. This is why it is important to accustom oneself to listening to the Word of God, to reading it. And I return once more to that advice: always keep with you a handy copy of the Gospel, a pocket edition of the Gospel, in your pocket, in your purse... and so, every day, read a short passage, so that you become used to reading the Word of God, understanding well the seed that God offers you, and thinking about the earth that receives it.”

Pope Francis

“The culture of comfort, which makes us think only of ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of other people, makes us live in soap bubbles which, however lovely, are insubstantial; they offer a fleeting and empty illusion which results in indifference to others; indeed, it even leads to the globalization of indifference. In this globalized world, we have fallen into globalized indifference. We have become used to the suffering of others: it doesn't affect me; it doesn't concern me; it's none of my business...! May the Virgin Mary, Solacium migrantium, “Solace of Migrants,” help us discover the face of her Son in all our brothers and sisters forced to flee their homeland because of the many injustices that continue to afflict our world.”

Pope Francis

MUSEUM TO MOSQUE: WHY HAGIA SOPHIA MATTERS

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan just joined the others by declaring his intention to convert the majestic Christian Basilica, Hagia Sophia (Church of the Holy Wisdom) – currently a national museum and one of the most visited sites of Turkey – into a mosque. And the Council of State, Turkey's highest administrative body, has decided he may do so.

What is the history behind Hagia Sophia? [It] is distinguished by indescribable beauty, excelling both in its size, and in the harmony of its measures, having no part excessive and none deficient; being more magnificent than ordinary buildings, and much more elegant than those which are not of so just a proportion. The church is singularly full of light and sunshine; you would declare that the place is not lighted by the sun from without, but that the rays are produced within itself, such an abundance of light is poured into this church. Thus did Procopius of Caesarea (circa 500-565 A.D.), a prominent Byzantine historian, describe Hagia Sophia of Constantinople (now Istanbul) in his book *De Aedificiis – On Buildings*, written around 554. He also credited the Emperor Justinian for promoting this magnificent work, among others. Justinian's church became an icon of Constantinople – the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. The emperor was so pleased with the result that during its dedication ceremony in December 537, he exclaimed: “O Solomon, I have surpassed thee!” comparing the church to the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.

For 900 years, Hagia Sophia was the center of the Byzantine Empire: the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople; the place where ecumenical councils were convened and emperors were crowned, and night vigils and majestic processions were held until the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans on May 29, 1453. Sultan Mehmet II, walking through the streets of the conquered city, “dismounted at the door of the church and bent down to take a handful of earth, which he then sprinkled over his turban as an act of humility before God.” The sultan converted the Church of Hagia Sophia to the Great Mosque of Aya Sofya, which it remained until 1934, when a decree by the Turkish Republic’s first president, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, turned the building into a museum.

In 1985, [UNESCO](#) – the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization – declared it a World Heritage Site.

Why does keeping the museum status of Hagia Sophia matter?

It matters to history and it matters to people, both Christians, and Muslims. It is important to preserve memory, and museums and statues are proven to be preservers of culture and religion – of what deserves to be kept, remembered, treasured, and transmitted to future generations. As a remembrance of both the Church of Hagia Sophia and the Mosque of Aya Sofya, the museum has had a proven legitimacy. The museum has not only served as a record of centuries-old history but also as a transmitter of knowledge from the Byzantine-Roman and Ottoman Empires to the Turkish Republic of Atatürk. This magnificent, once-religious object is a visible and tangible reminder of empires and religions of the Mediterranean world, beautifully synthesized on this site.

Since early in his political career, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has regretted Atatürk’s conversion of the Mosque of Aya Sofya into a museum. Instead, he prefers a cancellation of more than 900 years of Christian history, to the great consternation of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, the Russian Patriarch Kirill, and Pope Francis. For Bartholomew I, Hagia Sophia is a holy site in which East and West have embraced, and the cancellation of this memory will cause a sharp break between these two worlds. By keeping its status as a museum, the site would continue to serve as an example of solidarity and mutual understanding between Christianity and Islam. Patriarch Kirill of Russia considers the conversion of the Hagia Sophia museum to a mosque to be a threat to Christianity. In a recent interview with *Interfax*, Metropolitan Hilarion, head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, expressed disappointment with Erdogan’s cancel-history attitude, [saying](#): “Hagia Sophia is a world heritage site. It is not without reason that the talks about changing its status have shaken the whole world, and especially the Christian world. The church is devoted to Christ, Sophia the Wisdom of God is one of the names of Christ.”

Just this weekend, Pope Francis, who has gone out of his way to cultivate relations with Muslims, spoke out with uncharacteristic frankness: “My thoughts go to Istanbul. I’m thinking about Hagia Sophia. I am very distressed.” History cannot be destroyed, cancelled, or changed. Even some Turks have objected to their president’s efforts to make it into a single, false story.

For Catholics, history bears a transcendent meaning, a message to convey and a lesson to be learned – and the historian is called to discern the roots of that meaning. History is not linear or ideological – or, far worse, to be used for political purposes – but continually calls for new reflection and fresh analysis, so that the past is revisited and mistakes are not repeated.

The great Roman philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero wrote in *De Oratore*, *Historia Magistra vitae est* (“History is life’s teacher”). History, its monuments, and museums should not be destroyed or canceled, especially in an effort to dominate the present. They have a right to speak to us – and be heard. As for Hagia Sophia, time will tell how the cancel-history fashion will play out in Turkey. For now, it appears that Muslim prayers will once again be heard on July 27 in the most magnificent structure of the Eastern Church.

Prof. Ines A Murzaku



