

'GOOD AND BAD AND HOPE WITHIN US' – HOMILY - 23 July 2017

Yesterday was a wonderful day for the parish school fete.

THE GOODNESS OF PEOPLE

Let us recognise the goodness of people:

the hard work and many hours that people put into the preparation,
the dedication of school staff, parent and friends, fete committee,
the hosting on the day, and disassembling afterwards,
the children practising for their year presentations,
the children's choirs, the dancing,
the stall coordinators, stall helpers, the cooks,
the people who donated food, craft, books,
household items and other treasures.

The returning of former students and renewing friendships.
Grandparents and Uncles and Aunts adding to the family depth.
Babies wheeled around the school, parents watching over the toddlers,
the squeals of children enjoying the rides.

It was not just a fun day and a fun-raiser.
It was a community day,
a day when people work side by side with each other,
only possible when people feel a part of the community.

As life resumes as normal tomorrow,
hopefully that communal feeling uplifts us and sustains us
in whatever we have to do.

THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The sense of community continues with a funeral service on Monday
for a grandfather in our school community who died recently.
He volunteered much time around the grounds, tidying and repairing.
We remember his personality and genuine care for others.

And there are members of our wider community people facing **challenges:**
having **medical procedures and operations,**
struggling with **workplace difficulties,**
unemployment,
retraining courses,
students studying,
our newer families **learning English at TAFE,**
those **caring for family members at home.**

FEAST OF SAINT SHARBEL

We remember today, near the Feast of Saint Sharbel on Monday,
parish community members who are **concerned about family members overseas.**

Some have left home countries because of **persecution and fear of violence**, and are waiting to be processed in secondary nations like Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.
Some are internally **displaced in their own country**, such as Syria and Iraq.

There are displaced people in **Australia**, due to the **evil of domestic violence**.
There is a terrible sickness in society that still tolerates domestic violence and covers up.

As we pray for refugee and asylum seeker family members, we pray also for the people in Australia suffering the trauma, physical and emotional and spiritual pain of domestic violence and institutional violence.

How can there be both good and bad in our world, in our own nation, in our neighbourhoods, in our very selves?

Last week's Gospel spoke about little or no depth within ourselves, and the daily thorns choking us last week, and the good soil where we have great depth and produce abundantly in our lives.

GOOD AND BAD

Today's Gospel Matthew 13:24-43 addresses this important issue **within ourselves**.
In the parable of the wheat and the weeds.

Within us can be good - the wheat - and bad - the weeds.

We hear from scriptures scholars that the **weeds might be darnel**.
This is important.

Wheat and darnel in the early stages of growth look similar.

Sometimes we are confused, and have **difficulty distinguishing between good and bad choices**.

We can even have good intentions, and mess things up.

Let us listen to the Gospel passage from Jesus:

'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;

but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.

So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well.

And the slaves of the householder came and said to him,

"Master, did you not sow good seed in your field?"

Where, then, did these weeds come from?"

He answered, "An enemy has done this."

The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?"

But he replied,

"No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them.

Let both of them grow together until the harvest;

and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first

and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn." '

**The good and bad can grow side by side within us, and within our communities.
In prayer and stillness before God, we take time to reflect and review not only what we do, but also who we are.**

WE ASK GOD TO HELP US

- to recognise honestly, our goodness and temptations to evil
- to grow in goodness, to grow in the love of God
- for the grace to overcome our sinful temptations.

HOPE

The Gospel continues today with the word of Jesus

'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;

it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree,

so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

JESUS BRINGS HOPE – JESUS UPLIFTS US

Jesus brings hope, Jesus uplifts us

so that we are not paralysed or depressed by this struggle within.

Jesus continues with **parables of hope**:

the yeast, the treasure in a field, a fine pearl, the fish net.

PRAYING

Within the goodness of sharing in the parish school Fete,
or the goodness within ourselves expressed in many ways,
we thank God for this goodness symbolised by the wheat.

We take time to pray and review ourselves.

We need to review how we are going before God.

We ask God to help us to never be complacent or lukewarm
in our faith, in our families, in our parish community.

We ask God to help us challenge the sinful part of ourselves and our community.

We ask God to sustain us always in hope.

Amen

Fr. Gerry

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Good and Bad and Hope within us – 23 July 2017]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/072317.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook23072017>]

Other Support: [Rewrite the Story - Let's End Domestic & Family Violence](#)