

Reflection from Fr. Colm on the 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Audio posted to the Parish Website on Sunday 19th July 2020

Hello everybody, hope you're okay. 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, we seem to be gradually and slowly and surely progressing towards opening our churches again thank God however times to remain safe always on our minds.

The readings today, in particular, the Gospel remind me of my own childhood of course and I've mentioned before the proximity of a fishing village to where I grew up and lived for most of my life, a village called Howth. It's very scenic, very beautiful and one of the marvels of watching those boats coming in which I clearly to this day remember, the sorting out of the fish that was done. Fish were simply thrown from one side, the good ones remained, the bad ones were thrown aside and it was done with great speed however Jesus in today's Gospel is dealing with fishermen and yet He's using a farmer's analogy talking about the seed growing in amongst the weeds and He's doing this for a purpose because really what He is saying to us that in our living out as Christians, as Catholics we really cannot afford to be as discriminatory as fishermen with good fish and bad fish. We have to be sure to be able to decide and to be slow to judge and perhaps that's why He's using this beautiful story of the sower and the seed and the weeds do have to grow, the negative has to grow with the positive, the light has to grow with the darkness and the unjust, the just have to grow together.

Yes, we'd all like clarity, love to be able to decide, we worry at times about our families and our friends. Are they not able to see what's happening in society? But that is the grey area in which we find ourselves and which Pope Francis constantly reminds us of especially with the very clear analogy of the Church being the field hospital, not an exclusive place where we who got it right come on a Sunday or wherever it might be, we gather, we gather out of love and we gather out of a sense of solidarity with all that has broken in life. And so, while we see a plethora of protests on our streets of late, particularly I mean justifiable ones within the context of say Black Lives Matter. There again we see the diluting of what is right and what is wrong we see some jumping on the bandwagon of destruction in so many ways be it here or in the States. Yeah fundamentally we know what the issues are but living it out is a very different thing altogether and just it's a matter of be it fundamentalists of the right or the left we've just got to be cautious and

careful. The great dangers exist. There's no such thing as the perfect society, there's no such thing as the perfect Church, and there's no such thing as the perfect family nor is there the perfect person.

And so let us today listening to this Gospel perhaps be reminded of the poet Charles Bowen who wrote in a very wry manner in relation to our own sense of perhaps injustice or anger yes indeed "*The rain it raineth on the just and also on the unjust fella; But chiefly on the just, because the unjust hath the just's umbrella*" Yeah indeed but the Lord says that elsewhere in scriptures that He made the rain to fall on the good and bad alike and the sun to similarly do so.

So, we journey forward giving thanks for our faith and please God we'll all be together again in Church as community.