

# Encountering the Word

with Jeff Cavins

## Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Wisdom 12:13, 16–19 • Romans 8:26–27 • Matthew 13:24–43



## Let God Grow the Field

The Kingdom of God is not as simple or as tidy as we might sometimes wish it to be. In the Gospel this week, Jesus tells the parable of the wheat and the weeds. A man sows good seed in his field, but during the night, an enemy plants weeds among the wheat. When the plants begin to grow, the servants are alarmed; they immediately want to remove the weeds. Yet the master stops them and says to let both grow together until the harvest.

At first, this response may seem strange. If the weeds are harmful, why not remove them right away? The answer lies in the nature of the plant itself. In its early stages, the weed looks almost identical to wheat. If the servants tried to pull it up too early, they might destroy the wheat as well.

This parable reveals something important about the life of the Church and the human heart. The Church is not made up of perfect people: It is made up of people who are growing, who are at different stages of conversion, who are learning to follow Christ. Sometimes we are tempted to judge quickly—to sort people into categories of good and bad, faithful and unfaithful. Yet Jesus reminds us that growth takes time, and the final judgment belongs to God alone.

Jesus then tells another parable about the mustard seed, the smallest of seeds that grows into a large plant. What seems insignificant can become something great in the hands of God. The kingdom often begins in hidden ways through quiet acts of faith, patience, and perseverance.

Together, these parables remind us that God is at work even when we cannot see the full picture. Our task is not to judge the field but to remain faithful within it, trusting that God is nurturing growth that will one day bear fruit.



## Living the Gospel

This week, practice patience in a concrete way. When you encounter someone who frustrates you or whose spiritual journey looks different from your own, resist the instinct to judge or dismiss him or her. Instead, pray for him or her and ask God to continue the work he has begun in his or her life.

At the same time, pay attention to the small “mustard seeds” around you. Offer a quiet act of encouragement, a word of kindness, or a hidden sacrifice. Trust that God can take even the smallest acts of faith and grow them into something far greater than you imagine.

## Dive Deeper

Scan this code to watch:



Or go to [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ix1hu\\_5EDak](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ix1hu_5EDak)

## Ponder and Pray

» Think about moments when someone was patient with you while you were still learning or struggling. How did that patience allow you to grow?

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» Are there people in your life whom you are tempted to judge too quickly? What might it look like to entrust their story and their growth to God rather than trying to control the outcome yourself?

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» Where might God be planting small seeds of grace in your own life right now? Even if they seem insignificant, how could those small beginnings become something beautiful over time?

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### Make It Your Own

You and others in your household may use this space to write anything about today's Mass. It might be your view of Jeff Cavins's reflection, your priest's homily, or your answers to the questions on this page—anything to help you and your household get the most of today's Mass.

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**“The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings.”**  
—Romans 8:26