

The Communicator July 21, 2026

At Monday's Vestry Meeting the Hospitality Committee reported a 6000 peso profit from our Canada Day/4th of July celebration! Far more than the profit was the goodwill we hopefully established by hosting and feeding so many new faces. The simultaneous Library Book Sale was a huge draw and many who came to buy books stayed for the meal. Many thanks to the Vestry and the Hospitality Committee for their hard work making this happen. Thanks also to the Library staff. And a special thanks to Librarian Eugene Hoekendorf for his far and wide publicity that brought so many to our campus.

With great regret John Mitchell has asked to be relieved of hosting the Saint Michael's Lecture Series. Carol Hopkins will again host until we have a volunteer. Thank you John for bringing fascinating people to be interviewed. Your commitment to excellence set a high bar. Watch for lectures to come. Suggestions for speakers?

Our friend and Seminarian Tom Esakin has completed his course in homiletics with Father Doug. His "final exam" will be the sermon he preaches on August 23. It is our belief Bishop Treviño will be present on that day; we hope to make it a celebration of service.



Kids Club headed by Lenise Butler is on summer break but we look forward to its continuation in September. It is our hope that it will be on either September 27 or October 4, and that the choir will work with the kids to prepare an anthem for that date. It is the Sunday closest to Saint Michael's Day.

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Wendy Blake has been a faithful and **most** excellent treasurer for Saint Michael's. She took books that had long been neglected and brought them and us up to date with the Diocese, the State of Morelos, and Mexico. We are deeply in debt to Wendy and her assistant, Ivonne Cortinas.

Wendy resigned last week from this weighty position. Thank you Wendy for everything you have done for SMAAA.

Father Doug and Veronica are in Puerto Vallarta and beyond. They are enjoying a wonderful beach vacation thanks to the kindness of Rev. Gillian Ball who filled in for Father Doug last Sunday and will be in the pulpit again this week. The Rev. Tamara Newell will be preaching August 2. Gillian's very

moving sermon is, with her permission, printed at the end of The Communicator.

Despite the World Cup final game at 1PM on Sunday we had a large turnout for church and the hospitality hour.



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Have you noticed all the work being completed at the behest of our People's Warden, Walter Lopez and his crew? New paint everywhere. The green looks so fresh! Please give Walter some positive feedback.

Friday Senior Club (10-12) continues to do its faithful work. Thank you Lorena for your enthusiasm. Everyone seems to have a great time.

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Your Communicator was extremely fortunate to attend the Washington, D.C. ordination of our former seminarian, now Reverend, Michael Drell! It was a mountaintop experience not just for Michael but for the hundreds in attendance as witnesses of this moment. Michael was the only ordinand at one of the most beautiful churches in the United States, St. Paul's K Street. The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde preached and presided. She is a well-deserved Rock Star to many in the church. At the beginning of her sermon she even mentioned an angel priest in Mexico who first introduced her to Michael - our very own Rev. Tamara Newell. On the Sunday prior to Michael's ordination Father Doug offered this prayer at Saint Michael's.

O Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, hear our humble prayers on behalf of MICHAEL, one of ours who is called to become your priest this Thursday. Give him a deep faith, a bright and firm hope, and a burning love which will ever increase in the course of ministry.

In his loneliness, comfort him; in his sorrow, strengthen him; in his frustration, point out to him that it is through suffering that the soul is purified.

Show him that he is needed by the Church, he is needed by souls, he is needed for the work of redemption, and he is needed for the healing of the world which you have given us.

O loving Father, take to your heart MICHAEL who will be ever closer to you because of his priestly ordination, and because of the power which he will receive to carry on the work of Christ in a world which needs him so much. Be his comfort, be his joy, be his strength, and especially help him to live out and to defend the Holy Faith bestowed upon all of us by your Son Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

***St. Michael and All Angels Church, Cuernavaca, MEXICO -
Sunday, July 12th, 2026.***

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“A picture is worth a thousand words.” So, here are seven thousand words.



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Gillian's Sermon on Sunday, July 19, and the Gospel of St. Matthew 13: 24-30,36-43.

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: "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.'"

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

Gillian's thought-provoking **Reflection:** When I read the parable that Jesus told in today's Gospel, I recalled a story that I used in a much earlier sermon. I felt I would repeat it as it fits the theme of today's parable so well. It was a television film I saw many years ago. It obviously made an impact because I have never forgotten it. A young doctor returned to

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his hometown in New England to share a practice with his mentor - an old family doctor played by Bing Crosby. He found that the town had changed greatly. The people who lived there were very contented. Everyone was pleasant and helpful. But it was just too perfect. The young doctor was perplexed. As he began to make enquiries, he discovered a number of sudden and mysterious deaths. The strange thing was - all the people who had died inexplicably were the particularly troublesome citizens in the community. As this doctor pursued his investigation, he discovered, to his dismay, that the old doctor had been quietly murdering these people. He confronted his mentor who defended his actions. He felt he was benefiting his community by ridding it of undesirables. But, of course, the older doctor was playing God - **he** was judging who should live and who should die. He was judging people according to his own guidelines.

We might well sympathise with the motives of the old doctor, but not with the method he used to resolve them. We all envision an ideal world free from cruelty, oppression and injustice. We all dream about perfect countries, communities, churches, personal relationships. We all long for a model society where everyone is safe and happy. But the truth is that we live in a gulf between what is possible and what is reality. We have a sense of what the world should be like but understand that there is a dark side to everything. The Chinese have the symbol of yang and yin to describe the opposites in our world of light and darkness.

Jesus affirmed this dark side of our existence - the reality of evil in our world. He recognized that evil is not just the absence of good but an active power with a purpose of its own. And so, he told this parable of the wheat and the tares - or weeds. Jesus used farming and shepherding metaphors that spoke to the people of his time. Our modern society has tended to separate many from understanding these parables. We are so removed from the culture of his day that we have changed a word in this parable. Instead of 'tare' which was a very harmful weed we have softened it to 'weed' because few know what a 'tare' is. His parable describes someone who sowed good seed in his field in the same way that Christ sowed the goodness of God in the world. An enemy caused the tares to come and spread among the wheat.

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Tares in the story reveal how enemies of Jesus mingled with his followers. They denounced his word and sought to destroy his teachings. In the same way, chaos and destruction infect our human society and threaten the survival of goodness. We are particularly sensitive to this at present with so much exploitation and so much at stake in our world. We wish to eradicate all that impedes us on a search for peace and reconciliation. We are like the servants who are so concerned that they want to uproot the tares that threaten the wheat. They want to get rid of evil because they fear its presence. It too often seems to prosper. But the householder tells the servants to wait until the time of harvest. If they act too soon, they could well destroy the good along with the wicked. Eventually the harvest will come. The wheat will be separated for use. The tares will be burned.

In other words, it's not up to **us** to decide when and how justice will be done. Our actual responsibility is to be ruthless about the iniquity within ourselves, and to be very cautious about accusations we make against others. This parable could make us speculate on how judgemental we may be at times. Many of us have a tendency to leap to certain conclusions. We too easily decry an outcome that seems unfair and ignore explanations. We justify our decisions when we feel that we are right. We like to think that we are broad minded and yet it is all too easy to stereotype others. When we do this, we may well cause damage. We do not always have the hard evidence to judge the merit of another person. Jesus himself taught us that we should not judge, lest we ourselves be judged. He stressed this in the famous incident of the adulteress about to be stoned by the people. *"Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw the stone."* Time and time again, he reminds us that ultimate judgement is in the hands of God alone.

As human beings, we are a mixture of good and bad, strength and weakness. We are limited in our discernment. Our perceptions are influenced by our upbringing, our culture, our values, our personal beliefs. Because of our shortcomings, it is impossible for us to be completely objective or make decisions that are impartial. It's impossible for us to avoid making errors which could do more harm than good. We can too easily destroy the good along with the wicked.

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Most of us have an inherent sense of right and wrong. Most of us have integrity. Most of us have a desire to reconcile our world. This comes from a conviction that we have a Creator who exemplifies justice and whose will is one of peace and reconciliation. However, it is one thing to deter people from crimes against society or to decry bad actions. It's quite another to determine who is a "good" person and who is a "bad" person. Difficult as it is at times, only God can make that decision because only God can see into that person to make that judgement. There are certain things in the world which are to be left in God's hands.

It's certainly challenging to stop being judgemental or despairing when certain events strip away all our hope; when evil seems to triumph; when innocent people are caught up in immigration heavy-handedness; when the despairing deal with starvation; when people suffer conflict in the Middle East and elsewhere; when tragedy hits communities; when corruption prevails; when leaders fail to help their own people; when greed and despotism prosper. And so, Jesus attempts to show us through this parable that we are to have the patience to wait until the time of harvest. We are to trust God and to live in the hope that evil will ultimately be abolished.

Of course, this doesn't mean that we sit back and ignore the evil that prevails in many parts of our world. It doesn't mean that we throw up our hands and let malevolence have its own way. We can't escape evil, nor can we be indifferent to it. We have to understand that it is not up to our Creator to deliver us from an environmental crisis or war or devastation. We are reminded, yet again, that we are the hands and voice of Christ in the world. As such, we are to fight evil by serving others with compassion and to the best of our ability. We are to teach our children and grandchildren the values of honour and grace. We are to act and to speak out. We are to be disturbers of conscience. We are to be peacemakers by putting benevolence ahead of judgement. We are to lean toward pardon in place of condemnation, acceptance rather than denunciation. We are to be the voice of Christ that brings about reconciliation with those who have hurt us; forgive those who may have offended us; understand the troubled; speak up for justice and freedom. Our inherent sense of an ideal world encourages us to make things better. But, unlike the old doctor in the film, we are to resist the temptation to use wrongful means to destroy evil, no matter how good our intentions may be.

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I have to admit that the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds reflects our frustration in seeing people get away with threats to the well-being of society and our fragile planet. We are exasperated when dishonesty seems to get its way - that there is little attempt to stop corruption and despicable deeds. And so, we must rest in its assurance that there is hope and expectation of an eventual redressing of all wrongs, the abolishment of evil, the instilling of righteousness. Christ reminds us, time and time again, that there is a far greater power who rules the world. It is that authority who ultimately decides our fate and that of others.

Most of us live in the hope that perfect justice will eventually come. We may well feel helpless in a society governed by those who worship false idols. But it is also a world of beauty and inspiration; a world in which goodness and love abound; a world which continues to struggle for decency and integrity and peace; a world which witnesses positive changes and creates a greater awareness of justice issues; a world where many risk their lives and make sacrifices to help those in need; a world where we hear the gentle stories of empathy and caring. The struggle for justice and dignity and humanity endures because there are enough people who believe that our world ultimately belongs to a greater spiritual power.

As people who base our lives on this belief, we have a responsibility to follow Christ's ways. As such, we are not to assume powers which are not ours to take. Instead, we are to work for the benefit of our world according to God's will. We are to follow Christ and consider our actions in the light of his teaching. We are to be merciful toward others as God is merciful to us. Therefore, let us be willing to leave the tares until the time of harvest in the hope and promise of restitution given to us by Jesus Christ. **Amen**