

July 30, 2026 -- Thursday of the 17th week ‘

Jeremiah 18:1-10; Matt 13:47-53

Homily

In today's Gospel we have the conclusion of a long teaching by Jesus on the Kingdom of Heaven, in which he used many images to make his disciples understand various aspects of that Kingdom.

All these images, including today's, which compares the Kingdom to a net cast into the sea from which all sorts of things are taken, are intended to make us understand that the Kingdom of heaven is gradually being built here on earth. Throughout this long gestation period, there is a constant mixture of good wheat and tares, good fish and other worthless things. And the lesson of each of these parables or images is that the separation between the good and the bad will not take place before the Last Judgement. The reason is that until then, nothing is irreversible, nothing is lost, nothing is final. Every sin can be forgiven, every sinner is capable of conversion, every darkness can be transformed into light, every error can be corrected by the Truth. And if God is patient with us, how much more so must we be patient with one another and even with ourselves. All the more reason, too, for us to refrain from judging and separating the good from the bad.

The first reading from the Book of Jeremiah sheds some light on this parable (in fact, sometimes the New Testament sheds light on the Old and sometimes it is the Old that sheds light on the New). In Genesis, one of the two creation stories shows God taking clay and shaping the first man with his hands, then breathing his own breath of life into his nostrils. Here, the image is even more refined. God is compared to a potter who makes various objects on his wheel. When an object fails or breaks, he starts again and gives it another shape. And God concludes: 'You are in my hand, people of Israel, like clay in the potter's hand.'

In God's hands we can feel safe. By our sins we can often mess up God's work; but we know that he is patient. If we allow ourselves, he will put us back on the wheel again and again, moulding us until we are conformed to the image of his Son and filled with his Spirit.

Let us surrender ourselves into God's hands and open our hearts to receive the vital breath of his Spirit.

*** Today we celebrate the memory of Saint Alphonse-Mary of Liguori