

Peggy Brechtel

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### The Parable of the Weeds

"The situation is clear: the field is fertile and the seed is good; the Lord of the field has scattered the seed at the right moment and with great skill. He even has watchmen to make sure that the field is protected. If, afterwards, there are weeds among the wheat, it is because men have failed to respond, because they ---- and Christians in particular ---- have fallen asleep and have allowed the enemy to approach." (Bl. Jose Escriva, *Christ is Passing By*, 123).

This weed --- cockle --- looks very like wheat and can easily be mistaken for it until the ears appear. If it gets ground up with wheat it contaminates the flour and any bread made from that flour causes severe nausea when eaten. In the East personal vengeance sometimes took the form of sowing cockle among an enemy's wheat. Roman law prescribed penalties for this crime.

"When the careless servants ask the Lord why weeds have grown in his field, the explanation is obvious; '*inimicus homo hoc fecit*: an enemy has done this.

We Christians should have been on guard to make sure that the good things placed in this world by the Creator were developed in the service of truth and good. But we have fallen asleep --- a sad thing, that sluggishness of our heart! While the enemy and all those who serve him worked incessantly. You can see how the weeds have grown abundantly everywhere" (ibid. 123).

The end of this parable gives a symbolic explanation of why God allows evil to have its way for a time --- and for its ultimate end. Evil is to run its course on earth until the end of time; therefore, we should not be scandalized by the presence of evil in the world. It will be obliterated not in this life, but after death; at the Judgment (the harvest) the good will go to heaven and the bad to hell.