

JULY 23, 2017
SEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



God's Spirit makes us confident we are God's children.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Parable of the weeds
Monday	Matthew 7:15-20	A tree and its fruit
Tuesday	Romans 8:12-25	Life in the Spirit
Wednesday	Revelation 14:14-16	The harvest of the earth
Thursday	Colossians 1:9-14	Growing in knowledge
Friday	Galatians 5:16-26	Fruit of the Spirit
Saturday	Psalms 86	Save me Lord
Sunday	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Parables of the kingdom

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

God's Spirit doesn't make us slaves who are afraid of him. Instead, we become his children and call him our Father. God's Spirit makes us sure that we are his children. **Romans 8:15-16 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, make us confident children of your love and mercy and faithful servants in your world. Amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

O God, thank you for putting food on our table, love in our hearts, and hope in our souls. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you live and grow as a child of God's kingdom. May you belong to God, now and always.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK
*This is my Father's
World*



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- In Romans 8:15 and 23, Paul speaks of us as being adopted as children of God. Reflect on what it means to be adopted by God?
- In Romans 8:25, Paul talks about being people of hope who wait patiently. What do you wait for patiently with hope in Christ?
- In Romans 8:12-25, humanity and all creation suffer together. What does it mean to you that you are not being saved from creation but with creation?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 13:24-30.

Jesus tells the parable of the weeds and wheat. Since the first century church, one of the internal struggles has been the presence of false prophets or teachers of the faith. Instead of trying to separate the true from the false church, this parable argues that both will and should co-exist because to destroy the weeds would also destroy the wheat, the good fruitful community of faith. Reflect on how trying to judge and condemn others may have backfired in your own life or congregation. While this parable does not seek to promote indifference to sin and a false representation of the church, it does gladly acknowledge that God is in control and the fruits of the Christian faith will prevail. Offer the following prayer:

Dear God, help me to be faithful to your word and to resist the temptation to condemn others who differ from me, trusting in your grace, power, and truth. Amen.

SERVICE



Romans 8:19-22 tells us that all of creation suffers and waits for the revealing of the children of God. As humans we have been wasteful in our use of the environment and that has contributed to a "groaning" creation that affects us all. Learn about and select ways to minimize your use of water and energy, especially fossil fuels, as a way to help heal our fragile earth. Find new ways to protect our earth by reusing, reducing, recycling, and composting.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Psalms 86:15 is a foundational verse to describe God's care for us. Write or read this verse in two or more Bible translations, reflect on this verse and recite it at the beginning and/or end of each day this week.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org