

July 26, 2025

Daily Reflections



STS. JOACHIM AND ANNE, PARENTS OF MARY

By Sister Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Background

Today's feast celebrates the parents of Mary, the in-laws of Joseph and the grandparents of Jesus. None of Gospels mention them, not even their names. Anne and Joachim are the names given to them centuries later by Christians recognizing them as participants in the Incarnation event.

According to traditions about them, they were devout Jews of virtuous character, who -- like Mary and Joseph and Elizabeth and Zechariah -- epitomized the *anawim*, the faithful poor of Israel. Like Elizabeth and Zechariah, Anne and Joachim waited and prayed many years for the birth of a child.

Legends say that Mary's parents dedicated her to God, taking her to the Temple in Jerusalem when she was very young. A church in Israel named after St. Anne is believed by some to be constructed over the place where Mary was born. Traditions also connect Elizabeth and Zechariah to Anne and Joachim as they

waited and prayed many years for the birth of a child. Luke's story of the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple also recalls the prophet Samuel's mother Hannah, who tearfully begged God for a child.

Today's Gospel

Jesus proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder came to him and said, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." His slaves said to him, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?" He replied, "No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, 'First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

MATTHEW 13:24-30



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Reflection

This Gospel parable, uniquely Matthew's, considers the question of who is responsible for evil and what is to be done about it. The first question is easy to answer: an enemy is responsible. The question of what to do about it isn't as simple. To try to separate the weeds and wheat is as difficult as letting them grow together, with the wheat seedlings competing for water and nutrients. The parable doesn't say if the householder's plan succeeded. If it did, then the parable assures us that the forces of good can indeed withstand the forces of evil. It encourages patient trust in the One who will do the "separating" at the end of time. Notably, the parable invites nonretaliation against an enemy. A challenge in any era.

For Pondering and Prayer

- In what ways does this Gospel reading that is connected to the feast of Anne and Joachim offer suggestions about imitating their faith life?
 - Today, pray for parents/grandparents who need support: "May God's faithful presence console, calm, and renew you now and always."
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