



THE HIGH PLAINS PREACHER

Welcome to the High Plains Preacher, stories about the Bible, high wind, fast horses, lack of moisture and other elements of life in the Texas Panhandle

Weeds and Wheat

by Fr. Jim Schmitmeyer

Have you heard of *broom weed*? It's a nice, homey name. It makes you think that Indian women and Pioneer wives might have tied its stiff bristles on the end of sticks and used them for brooms. But if they did, they wouldn't have used them for long because, once a broom weed dries out, its stems break apart into hundreds of pieces.

This make these weeds *charlatans* which only makes me despise them all the more! These invasive weeds can take over a section of pasture in no time. And they are seemingly imperviousness to any pesticide a farmer might apply to their spidery stems and waxy leaves.

I *do not like* broom weed. Which may explain why I do not particularly care for the message found in the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 13, where Jesus suggests that a farmer allow weeds to grow alongside the wheat lest the pulling out of the weeds result in the pulling out of the wheat as well.

Speaking of weeds, I recently read an article about something called Vavilonian mimicry. This process, discovered by a Russian plant geneticist named Nikolai Vavilov, means that some weeds can adapt and take on the characteristics of surrounding plants. Vavilov discovered that rye, when growing among wheat can start bearing seeds like wheat and even adjust its growing pattern to follow the same annual schedule as wheat.

In other words, weeds can change.

I doubt that broom weed has any intention of changing its way. But let's hope that a similar process can occur within us when God plants us—and when we choose to plant ourselves—in among the weeds, but with good company, the company of people who reach for the Bread of Heaven and hope to produce a hundred fold.

