

Arthur J. Williams was born on Thanksgiving Day in 1972. He grew up on the South Side of Chicago and is a diehard White Sox fan.

He is best known as the man who successfully counterfeited the 1996-series \$100 Bill ... and his life is the subject of the book titled: *"The Art of Making Money."*

Counterfeiting can cause unintended inflation, resulting in a reduction in the value of authentic money. In addition to decreasing consumer confidence, companies get stuck with the counterfeit bills and receive no compensation, resulting in higher prices.

These days, you see all sorts of things on various bills as the government attempts to thwart counterfeiters: (1) holograms, (2) color-shifting inks, (3) watermarks, (4) raised printing, and (5) magnetic security threads.

Yet despite their best efforts, professional counterfeiters are hard at work trying to defeat the newest counter-measures in order to continue their criminal enterprise.

Today is the Sixteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time. We continue in the Gospel reading from the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew where Jesus relates several parables.

[In today's reading we hear three more parables.]

The largest portion of the Gospel is the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds.

If you remember from last week's reading, Jesus explained that the seed represents the Word of God sown by Christ in the hearts of His faithful people.

In today's variation of the parable, something else is growing ... something unwanted. When asked where this came from, we are told: *"An enemy has done this."*

The enemy of our souls presents a false Gospel, a counterfeit version of the Word of God ... which has no spiritual value ... and no power to save.

In the first reading from the Book of Wisdom, we hear the attributes of the true God - when we are told “[t]here is no god besides [God.]” The attributes of the One True God are (1) justice, (2) mighty power, (3) mercy, and (4) kindness.

The Psalm goes on to remind of God’s qualities with that familiar verse telling us that God is “*merciful and gracious, slow to anger, [and] abounding in kindness and fidelity.*”

By knowing and remembering Who God is, we can avoid false gods in our lives ... putting our faith in the One True God ... and not running off after counterfeits.

St. Paul even points out that it is the Holy Spirit Who intercedes for us and helps us to pray ... so that we can persevere in the Truth of the Gospel ... following Jesus Christ ... and abiding in God’s holy Will.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us fix our eyes on Jesus - He Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let us not be drawn astray by worthless counterfeits, but trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit, may we be guided in faith and prayer, and always live out our own lives in God’s will.