

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 4, 2020

Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

The parables and stories that Matthew will tell us from now through November are all situated in the last week of Jesus' life, a detail that tells us to listen to them with a particular urgency. Today's parable of the landowner and tenants used a situation familiar to Jesus' audience. A wealthy landowner wanted his harvest money, but the tenants rebelled with the crazy idea that if they eliminated the owner's servants and son, they could have it all.

We can easily apply Jesus' parable to church and state leaders, critiquing their lack of faithful stewardship. But, like it or not, using a parable to point a finger at another is a self-righteous distortion of Jesus' message. He wouldn't tolerate it from us anymore than he did from his contemporaries. If we have the courage to listen for a Gospel message and not just seek self-validation and praise, we must ask how this story applies to us and not just to the corrupt authorities.

We can start from with our first reading. Listen to Isaiah's "song of the vineyard" as it gives us a picture of God's vantage point on human life and the earth we have been given. We hear of God's tenderness for all of creation, the loving gaze with which God watches over evolution with all its green growth and painful transformations. We then hear of God's heartbreak. The wild grapes of bitterness and discord sprout where all had been designed to bring forth fruit to transform into the good wine of joy and harmony.

When we listen to the parable of the mutinous tenants, we can read it the parable as addressing all of us as the stewards of our earth. What would happen if we interpreted this parable in light of Pope Francis' encyclical "*Laudato Si'*, on Care for Our Common Home"? In it, Francis tells us that God's vineyard, our sister Earth, is crying out to us "because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her" (LS #2). There can hardly be a more direct way of implicating us as tenants just like those in Jesus' parable.

Jesus told the story of tenants who had forgotten who they were. Instead of acting like servants or collaborators with the owner, they decided that they should be the sole masters, beholden to no one, privileged to eliminate anyone who got in their way. Francis describes our misguided understanding of our relationship to Mother Earth saying, “We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life” (#2).

Francis warns us that we have disrupted the harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation “by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge our creaturely limitations” (#66). Francis tells us that today’s ecological crisis is a summons to profound interior conversion of each of us. Calling us to become a people who produce the fruit of the kingdom of God, he says: “Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.”

Although the chief priests and Pharisees called for the elimination of the rebellious tenants, you’ll notice that Jesus didn’t. Instead he summoned others to take their place and do what needed to be done. Francis tells us: “The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.”

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Prelude: Sing along Edwin Hawkins' "Oh Happy Day" Anthony Brown with First Baptist Church of Glenarden, Landover, MD Combined Choir:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olQrCfkvbGw&list=RDMHPPpW6IFn0>

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you told us how God showed his love for us:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you came as God's greatest gift to us:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you showed us that God has expectations of us:

Lord, have mercy.

Opening Prayer

Yours, O God, is the vineyard and its harvest,

yours the kingdom of justice and peace.

You call your people to tend its growth.

Bless the work entrusted to our hands,
that we may offer you an abundance of just works,
a rich harvest of peace.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever.

Let the Church Say.....AMEN.

**Readings for the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
October 4 2020**

1st Reading – Isaiah 5:1-7

¹ Let me now sing of my friend, my friend's song concerning his vineyard. My friend had a vineyard on a fertile hillside;
² he spaded it, cleared it of stones, and planted the choicest vines; within it he built a watchtower, and hewed out a wine press. Then he looked for the crop of grapes, but what it yielded was wild grapes.
³ Now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard:
⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard that I had not done? Why, when I looked for the crop of grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?
⁵ Now, I will let you know what I mean to do with my vineyard: take away its hedge, give it to grazing, break through its wall, let it be trampled!
⁶ Yes, I will make it a ruin: it shall not be pruned or hoed, but overgrown with thorns and briars; I will command the clouds not to send rain upon it.
⁷ The vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his cherished plant; he looked for judgment, but see, bloodshed!^{[L] [SEP]} for justice, but hark, the outcry!

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm – Psalms 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

⁹ A vine from Egypt you transplanted;
you drove away the nations and planted it.^{[L] [SEP]}
¹² It put forth its foliage to the Sea,
its shoots as far as the River.^{[L] [SEP]}

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

¹³ Why have you broken down its walls,^{[L] [SEP]}
so that every passer-by plucks its fruit,^{[L] [SEP]}
¹⁴ The boar from the forest lays it waste,^{[L] [SEP]}
and the beasts of the field feed upon it?^{[L] [SEP]}

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

15 Once again, O LORD of hosts,^{[L][SEP]}
look down from heaven, and see;^{[L][SEP]}
take care of this vine,^{[L][SEP]}16 and protect
what your right hand has planted^{[L][SEP]}
the son of man whom you yourself made strong.^{[L][SEP]}
R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

19 Then we will no more withdraw from you;^{[L][SEP]}
give us new life, and we will call upon your name.^{[L][SEP]}
20 O LORD, God of hosts, restore us;^{[L][SEP]}
if your face shine upon us, then we shall be saved.^{[L][SEP]}
R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

2nd Reading – Philippians 4:6-9

Brothers and sisters:^{[L][SEP]}6 Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. 7 Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable,^{[L][SEP]} whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious,^{[L][SEP]} if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

9 Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you.

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

Gospel – Matthew 21:33-43

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people:^{[L][SEP]}33 “Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard,^{[L][SEP]} put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey.

34 When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce.

35 But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned.

36 Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way.

37 Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’

38 But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.’

39 They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

40 What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?”

41 They answered him, “He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times.”

42 Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes?

43 Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.....Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Reflection Prompts:

First, listen to “Keep Your Hand on the Plow” sung by the Black Pioneer Heritage Singers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmQD0h5fRw0>

- What can you do to be a good steward of the planet? What changes do you need to make in your consuming habits?
- How is the Spirit leading you to greater fruitfulness in your life?
- How do you call forth the fruitful gifts of others to serve the Gospel?

Meditation Prompts:

First, listen to “The Creator Has a Master Plan” sung by Leon Thomas <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoYnvw-97II>

Then read reflectively this passage from Philippians 4:8:

whatever is true,

whatever is honorable,^[L]_[SEP]

whatever is just,

whatever is pure,

whatever is lovely,

whatever is gracious,^[L]_[SEP]

if there is any excellence

and if there is anything worthy of praise,

think about these things.

- Silently think on these positives, then share.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS – October 4, 2020
TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

Presider: Let us pray, especially for those who yearn for consolation and peace.

Worship Leader

1. That we may have the courage to act on Paul’s words to witness by lives that are true, just, gracious, and honorable. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.** (ASSEMBLY RESPONDS: **Shine on us, O God.**)
2. During this month dedicated to Mary, for fruitfulness for all the ministries performed in her name. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
3. On this Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, for a rededication to “halt the destruction of nature” and care for the earth – its air, water and soil and its biodiversity. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
4. For an end to the Death Penalty and Human Trafficking, especially in Georgia. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
5. For healing for all who are imperiled by the Covid-19 pandemic, including our President, and for wisdom for public health and medical leaders to discover therapeutics and vaccines. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
6. For those who need public assistance of any kind, and for those who have been denied assistance. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
7. For those awaiting a good harvest and those whose harvests are disappointing or disastrous. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
8. For all who seek healing from substance use disorders and mental health issues, that they find help and mutual support. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**
9. For those throughout the world who suffer for their faith. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**

10. For all those who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those listed in our bulletin, and for all those living with HIV and AIDS, that they know our community's care for them. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**

11. For all the dead, that they see God face to face, especially Carolyn Read and Fr. Chester Smith, SVD for whom this Mass is being celebrated. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**

12. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Shine on us, O God.**

Presider: Gracious God, help us to be faithful in our commitment to you and to one another, and forgive us when we fail. Strengthen our sense of responsibility that comes with the many gifts you have given us. We humbly ask this in the name of your beloved Son, Jesus. LET THE CHURCH SAY – AMEN!

Sing or recite “The Lord’s Prayer.” Then, hear Hezekiah Walker – “Better”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFgkZX9Z65M>

Closing: Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.^[L SEP]
Where there is hatred let me sow love;^[L SEP]
Where there is injury, pardon;^[L SEP]
Where there is doubt, faith;^[L SEP]
Where there is despair, hope;^[L SEP]
Where there is darkness, light;^[L SEP]
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek^[L SEP]
To be consoled as to console;^[L SEP]
To be understood as to understand;^[L SEP]
To be loved as to love.^[L SEP]
For it is in giving that we receive;^[L SEP]
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;^[L SEP]
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Closing: Hear “One” sung by Leon Thomas:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzAPyoaBdp4>