



CELEBRATING AT HOME

27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Stewards of God's gift (Matthew 21:33-43)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

We have been called by God
to be the Church,
**the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God
in this world.**

Eternal God,
your love for us
surpasses all our hopes and desires.

**Forgive our failings,
keep us in your peace
and lead us in the way of salvation.**

Scripture Reading (*Matthew 21:33-43*)

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people, 'Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, but they dealt with them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance.' So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They answered, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants, who will deliver the produce to him when the season arrives.'

Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures:

"It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone.

This was the Lord's doing
and it is wonderful to see?"

I tell you then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.'

Reflection - *Stewards of God's gift*

In last Sunday's parable, Jesus addressed the Jerusalem priests and elders with a message that "action speaks louder than words".

This Sunday, Jesus continues his address to them, building upon that message by using another parable.

This week's parable asks us how we have used the gifts that God has entrusted to us. It is essentially a parable about stewardship.

God has entrusted the kingdom to us, individually and collectively. We are expected to cultivate and manage this Kingdom life in such a way that it bears good fruit, fruit that we can present to God, the 'owner of the vineyard'.

There is nothing in the parable to indicate that there was any actual produce for the landowner to collect. It may very well be that the tenants had simply neglected the wonderful vineyard altogether and allowed it to fall into ruin.

Each of us has been given, not only the gift of life, but the wealth provided by God's grace – the very kingdom of God. Indeed, we have been privileged. However, with this privilege comes responsibility and we are ultimately responsible to God for the way we use or neglect the Kingdom within. We have to become a people who produce the fruit of the kingdom: love, mercy, justice, forgiveness, tolerance, hope, joy, deeds of loving kindness.

What will we do with the Kingdom that has been entrusted to us?

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Let us pray that we may leave all the various 'vineyards' of our worlds in a better condition than how we were given them. Let us develop and sustain our awareness, seek out opportunities to contribute and then make judicious use of the gifts and grace that God has given us by letting God's grace be seen at work in us; and, through us, at work in the world.

We are stewards of the Kingdom and of God's grace. Let's not waste such a great gift.

Prayers of Intercession

We are blessed by the words of the Gospel.

**Weave your life, your courage
and your strength into our daily lives.**

Help us embrace every race and every culture,
and cherish your presence in everyone.

Guide us as we work,
to produce the fruit of the Kingdom.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

God,
you are for ever re-creating us in your love.
May we act justly,
love tenderly,
and walk humbly with you and each other.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us now and always. Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
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