



FAITHFULNESS IN THE VINEYARD OF THE LORD

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In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the tenants in the vineyard. A landowner carefully prepares a vineyard and entrusts it to tenants. When harvest time comes, he sends servants to collect the fruits, but the tenants beat and kill them. Finally, he sends his son, hoping he will be respected, yet they kill him as well. Jesus makes it clear that the wicked tenants will be punished, and the vineyard will be given to others who will bear fruit.

The vineyard represents God's Kingdom. The landowner is God. The tenants are the leaders of Israel who were entrusted with God's people. The servants are the prophets who were sent again and again, yet rejected and killed. The son is Jesus himself. Through this story, Jesus shows us how God has been patient for so long. He kept sending messengers, hoping his people would listen. But instead of welcoming them, they were rejected.

In this parable, we can see the patience of the landowner. He did not give up easily. Even after his

servants were harmed, he still sent his son. God is trying to show us how patient and loving he is to us. He does not quickly punish. He gives many chances. He hopes for change. As someone who has experienced both struggles and blessings in life, I can see how patient God has been with me, too. There were times when I did not immediately respond to his call, yet he continued to guide me gently.

The parable also speaks about responsibility. The tenants were trusted with something valuable, but they forgot that it was not theirs. Sometimes in our lives, we act as if everything belongs to us. Our talents, ministries, and even the people we serve are not really ours. They are just entrusted to us. God has entrusted us with responsibilities, whether in our community or in our family. The question for us now is, am I producing good fruit? Am I being faithful to what God has given me?

Jesus also speaks about the stone rejected by the builders becoming the cornerstone. This

means that even if people reject Jesus, God's plan will still succeed. Rejection is not the end. Sometimes we experience rejection, failure, or misunderstanding. Yet God can turn these into something meaningful. The leaders who heard this parable understood that Jesus was speaking about them, and instead of reflecting, they became angry. Their hearts were closed.

This Gospel invites us to examine our hearts. This Lenten season, let us ask ourselves: Are we open to correction, or do we become defensive? Do we welcome God's messengers in our lives, even when they challenge us? God is not only asking for activity. He is asking for fruits. Fruits of love, justice, humility, and faithfulness.

In the end, this parable is both a warning and a hope. It warns us not to take God's grace for granted. But it also assures us that God's Kingdom will continue. The stone that was rejected has become the foundation. Even if there is suffering or rejection, God's love and plan will always stand firm.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps 31 [30]: 2, 5)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

**In you, O Lord, I put my trust,
let me never be put to shame;
release me from the snare they
have hidden for me, for you
indeed are my refuge.**

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

*(These [or similar words] may be used
to address the assembly.)*

P—The Parable of the Tenants is a thinly-disguised allusion to what happens to Jesus in his passion and death. Jesus is the son rejected and killed outside the vineyard due to the jealousy and evil intent of the religious leaders. But in his resurrection, Jesus would become the “keystone of the structure” of the new Israel, the new People of God entrusted with the vineyard, that is, with the things of God.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(Pause)

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Grant, we pray almighty God, that, purifying us by the sacred practice of penance, you may lead us in sincerity of heart to attain the holy things to come.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



Reading (Gen 37:3–4, 12–13a, 17b–28a) *(Sit)*

Because of envy, Joseph's brothers plan to kill him, and later they sell him as a slave. Eventually, under God's guidance, he will become vizier of Egypt and will save his brothers from famine. Like Jesus in the Gospel, Joseph is the "rejected one" who repays evil with good.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

ISRAEL LOVED Joseph best of all his sons, for he was the child of his old age; and he had made him a long tunic. When his brothers saw that their father loved him best of all his sons, they hated him so much that they would not even greet him.

One day, when his brothers had gone to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem, Israel said to Joseph, “Your brothers, you know, are tending our flocks at Shechem. Get ready; I will send you to them.”

So Joseph went after his brothers and caught up with them in Dothan. They noticed him from a distance, and before he came up to them, they plotted to kill him. They said to one another: “Here comes that master dreamer! Come on, let us kill him and throw him into one of the cisterns here; we could say that a wild beast devoured him. We shall then see what comes of his dreams.”

When Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from their hands, saying, “We must not take his life. Instead of shedding blood,” he continued, “just throw him into that cistern there in the desert; but do not kill him outright.” His purpose was to rescue him from their hands and return him to his father. So when Joseph came up to them, they stripped him of the long tunic he had on; then they took him and threw him into the cistern, which was empty and dry.

They then sat down to their meal. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, their camels laden with gum, balm and resin to be taken down to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers: “What is to be gained by killing our brother and concealing his blood? Rather, let us sell him to these Ishmaelites, instead of doing away with him ourselves. After all, he is our brother, our own flesh.” His brothers agreed. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 105)

R—Remember the marvels the LORD has done.

1. When the LORD called down a famine on the land/ and ruined the crop that sustained them,/ He sent a man before them,/ Joseph, sold as a slave. **(R)**

2. They had weighed him down with fetters,/ and he was bound with chains,/ Till his prediction came to pass/ and the word of the LORD proved him true. **(R)**

3. The king sent and released him,/ the ruler of the peoples set him free./ He made him lord of his house/ and ruler of all his possessions. **(R)**

Verse before the Gospel (Jn 3:16) *(Stand)*

All—God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son; so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

Gospel (Mt 21:33–43, 45–46)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS SAID to the chief priests and the elders of the people: “Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, 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. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce. But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more

numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, 'They will respect my son.' 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.' They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?" 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." 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? 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." When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he was speaking about them. And although they were attempting to arrest him, they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (Sit)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us pray to our Father in heaven, that through our rejection of evil and perseverance in good works, we may yield a rich harvest for the glory of his name. With confidence, we pray:

R—Lord, graciously hear us.

C—May the Church see herself as redeemed by Christ but always in need of reform, for she embraces in her bosom the just and the wayward, the saints and sinners among God's people. We pray: **(R)**

C—May our works of prayer, fasting, and sharing be expressions of our oneness with Christ who continues to suffer in our brothers and sisters who bear the brunt of poverty, joblessness, and violations of their human dignity. We pray: **(R)**

C—May our Lenten religious practices be accompanied by actions and programs aimed to break the yoke of corruption, injustice, and oppression. We pray: **(R)**

C—May the Lord watch over those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake and make their suffering redound to the benefit and salvation of others, even those who oppose and persecute them. We pray: **(R)**

C—May our brothers and sisters who have gone ahead of us be numbered among the saints in heaven. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent need of our community and our personal intention (*pause*). We pray: We pray: **(R)**

P—Almighty Father, you chose the weak to confound the mighty and the proud. Be our refuge and strength in time of trouble. Give us the courage to stand by our faith.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.



Presentation of the Gifts

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept...

Prayer over the Offerings (Stand)

P—May your merciful grace prepare your servants, O God, for the worthy celebration of these mysteries, and lead them to it by a devout way of life.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface I (Lent)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For by your gracious gift each year your faithful await the sacred paschal feasts with the joy of minds made pure, so that, more eagerly intent on prayer and on the works of charity, and participating in the mysteries by which they have been reborn, they may be led to the fullness

of grace that you bestow on your sons and daughters.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory as without end we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All—We proclaim your Death...

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us...

All—For the kingdom...

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion

(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy...

Communion Antiphon (1 Jn 4: 10)

God loved us, and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

Prayer after Communion

(Stand)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

Having received this pledge of eternal salvation, we pray, O Lord, that we may set our course so well as to attain the redemption you promise.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing. (*Pause*)

Grant your people, O Lord, we pray, health of mind and body, that by constancy in good deeds they may always merit the defense of your protection.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass is ended. Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions.)*

To whom can I turn if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to you, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted, protection when

persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising, and serving you. My Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled by me and by all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity for those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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