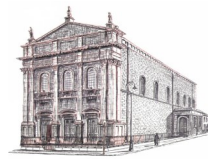




PARISH OF ST. AGATHA 3RD/4TH OCTOBER 2020



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Jesus I Trust in You

POPE FRANCIS ON THE PARABLE TODAY

The parable of the murderous vinedressers (Mt 21:33-43) is an admonition for all times, including our own. The vineyard is the Lord's, not ours. And God awaits the fruit of His vineyard from those He has sent to work in it. The parable describes a landowner who departs and leaves his vineyard in the hands of tenants. At harvest time he sends some servants to collect the fruit; but the vinedressers welcome the servants with a beating and some even kill them. The master sends other servants, more numerous, but they receive the same treatment. The peak is reached when the landowner decides to send his son: "the vine growers have no respect for him, on the contrary, they think that by eliminating him they can take over the vineyard, and so they kill him too".

EXPLANATION OF THE PARABLE

The Pope explained that the vineyard represents the people chosen by the Lord; the servants are the prophets, sent by God; and the son is Jesus. "Just as the prophets were rejected, Jesus too was rejected and killed", said the Pope. At the end of the story, Jesus asks the leaders of the people, "When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?". The landowner, they say, will severely punish those wicked people and entrust the vineyard "to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him at the proper time".

A "VERY HARSH PARABLE"

Pope Francis said that with this "very harsh" parable, "Jesus confronts his interlocutors with their responsibility, and He does so with extreme clarity". "In any age, those who have authority among God's people may be tempted to do their own work instead of that of God Himself", said the Pope. But the vineyard is the Lord's, not ours. "The spiritual stature of a person's life is measured by love," but "some believers think that it consists in the imposition of their own ideologies upon everyone else". Authority, the Pope said, is a service, and, as such, should be exercised for everyone's good and for the dissemination of the Gospel. (Vatican News).

THE FERTILE VINEYARD OF A MOTHER'S WOMB

In today's Gospel (Matt 21:33-43), Jesus compares us like Tenants leasing a Vineyard. He planted *choice vines* in His Vineyard on earth, which refers to us as Members of His Church. It is Jesus (landowner) who went *abroad*, meaning He ascended to Heaven, leaving us to take care of the Church, planted on His behalf. We care for it and each other, by gracefully cultivating our Faith, using the Sacraments of the Church. Practicing and exercising our faith keeps our bodies free from sin. God has found *fertile ground* and *cleared* away *all* obstructing *stones* (Is 5:1-7). This means He has cleared our hearts of Original Sin. In Baptism, Jesus prepares a fertile soul and heart to **Grow in His Love**. He has left a wine press to yield healthy grapes. The Wine Press symbolises Jesus emptying (pressing) everything of Himself out for us, through His Sacrifice on Calvary (Mass). The Fruits He produces are the Sacraments of Love and Mercy. God **Thirsts** (Jn 19:28), for us to *come to our senses* (Lk 15:17) and press down on our sinful pride and arrogance to produce the fruits of humility, by becoming blessed here on earth. He **Thirsts** for us to be found in a State of Grace, when He sends His Son to take account of our tenancy someday. Our hearts, become infertile, through living in direct disobedience to His Divine Will and Teachings.

BY KILLING THE MESSENGER, WE KILL JESUS

The Vineyard or Parish is not owned by any group of parishioners. Everybody, whether a new local, a new foreigner or even a new Priest, should be welcomed in the name of Jesus. No group have a right to *murder any messenger*, because they feel threatened of losing their long-standing control, like the misguided tenants in the Gospel. In a similar way, none of us own our bodies. In Baptism, our bodies were changed into perfect temples like mini-kingdoms, for God's purpose. Christ shares His Kingdom and Kingship with us, making us co-heirs to something even bigger to come in another Life! In turn, we are called first to share the ruling of our mini-kingdoms (bodies, hearts and minds), with Him. Our bodies are spiritual altars, on which the sacrifice of a holy life should be offered to God daily. *We must not let sin reign in our mortal bodies or command our obedience to bodily passions, we must not let any part of our body turn into an unholy weapon fighting on the side of sin, we should, instead, offer ourselves to God* (Rom 6:12-18).

DAY OF JUDGEMENT

As tenants, we are entrusted with the responsibility to carry out the sanctifying work of redemption, under God's Command. Our lives are not about us, but about God and His Divine Will for us. *Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven*. This obedience will produce an eternal harvest of eternal life beyond the grave. In the measure, in which, we disown and disobey God on earth, will be the exact same measure of treatment, we will receive from God, on our Day of Judgement. *For whoever does the Will of My Father in Heaven is My brother and sister and mother* (Matt 12:50). To live a life of self-service instead of divine service, places our tenancy in mortal danger and removes our inheritance rights of the Heavenly Family, which is our claim to enjoy Eternal Life.

THE FERTILE GROUND OF THE WOMB

Our Lady understood this perfectly. Mary obediently allowed her Immaculate Heart, mind, soul and womb to become a fertile Vineyard, a new Garden of Eden, producing the blessed fruit of Love and Mercy: Jesus Christ, the Second Adam. If the sinner refuses to repent, by corrupting fertile ground, in order to produce self-serving harvests of sour grapes, then they will go *unpruned and be left overgrown by the briar and the thorn*. This means that God will let the unrepentant sinner dwell in their sinful choice on earth, which will sadly end-up with eternal punishment in Hell. **That is the sinner's choice, not God's choice**. Catholics who voted for Pro-Choice, in the Government Referendum, are like the rebellious tenants, because that choice gives the ability to choose abortion. God's little messengers, after innocently entering the vineyard of the womb, are slaughtered and killed. People who legally enabled this Choice to Murder, seem content to dwell in sin. The principle of cooperation teaches, that everyone who helped to bring this into law, are guilty of the murder. If one was unaware of this, then it is never too late **to come to one's senses and repent**, asking God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Confession. We all have a divine duty and service to protect the messenger sent by God into fertile ground. He will always forgive a sorrowful heart, who confesses with their lips. His Divine Mercy awaits us.

God bless, Fr. Brendan.