

# Sunday, October 4, 2026 – Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

## First Reading - Isaiah 5:1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The vineyard of the Lord God of hosts is the House of Israel.

Let me sing to my friend  
the song of his love for his vineyard.  
My friend had a vineyard  
on a fertile hillside.  
He dug the soil, cleared it of stones,  
and planted choice vines in it.  
In the middle he built a tower,  
he dug a press there too.  
He expected it to yield grapes,  
but sour grapes were all that it gave.

And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem  
and men of Judah,  
I ask you to judge  
between my vineyard and me.  
What could I have done for my vineyard  
that I have not done?  
I expected it to yield grapes.  
Why did it yield sour grapes instead?

Very well, I will tell you  
what I am going to do to my vineyard:  
I will take away its hedge for it to be grazed on,  
and knock down its wall for it to be trampled on.  
I will lay it waste, unpruned, undug;  
overgrown by the briar and the thorn.  
I will command the clouds  
to rain no rain on it.  
Yes, the vineyard of the Lord of hosts  
is the House of Israel,  
and the men of Judah  
that chosen plant.  
He expected justice, but found bloodshed,  
integrity, but only a cry of distress.'

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 79:9. 12-16. 19-20. R. Is 5:7

(R.) The vineyard of the Lord is the House of Israel..

### **Second Reading - Philippians 4:6-9**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

**Do these things and the God of peace will be with you.**

There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Keep doing all the things that you learnt from me and have been taught by me and have heard or seen that I do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

### **Gospel Acclamation - John 15:15**

Alleluia, alleluia!

I call you friends, says the Lord,

because I have made known to you

everything I have learnt from my Father.

Alleluia!!

### **Gospel - Matthew 21:33-43**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

**He leased his vineyard to other farmers.**

Jesus said to the chief priests and the 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, and 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.’

**A Case of Systemic Injustice**  
**Reflection on the Gospel- 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A**  
**(Matthew 21:33-43)**  
**Veronica Lawson RSM**

As the 2026 Season of Creation comes to an end, we pledge ourselves to maintain our commitment to the cry of the Earth and the cry of those rendered poor. Among the most abandoned of Earth’s “poor” are those who are still enslaved. While the international community has long-since outlawed slavery, we have become increasingly aware of the persistence of a lucrative global industry structured around the sexual and labour enslavement of vulnerable people and exacerbated by the multiple conflicts affecting our globe.

Today’s gospel features a parable about an absentee landowner with slaves to do his bidding. Commentators focus on many aspects of this parable, particularly the judgement on the religious authorities who have rejected God’s messengers. Few consider the fate of the slaves as slaves in the parable. Our contemporary sensibilities in relation to slavery invite a new reading of such texts, a reading that critiques the power that some in the Earth community exercise over other humans and over the natural world that has for so long been treated as the property of humans to manipulate at will.

The frequent translation of the Greek *doulos* (m.) and *doulē* (f.) as “servant” rather than as “slave” masks the underlying reality that some members of the community, even within the circle of believers gathered at the Eucharistic table, were actually treated as the property of others in the community. The fact is that nobody in the ancient world, not even Jesus of Nazareth, questioned this situation. The injustice was systemic. It is not surprising, therefore, that the slaves in today’s parable are considered by the “tenants” to be dispensable. Their role is to collect the fruit from the harvest on behalf of the absentee landowner.

The “tenants” clearly have no intention of parting with any portion of the produce, presumably the tax imposed on them as a condition of their tenancy. They react violently when confronted by the three slaves who are the landowner’s emissaries. They beat one slave, kill another and stone yet another. The slaves represent the landowner whose demands they refuse to meet. The landowner risks the lives of other slaves by sending yet another and bigger delegation. This second group of emissaries meets the same fate as their predecessors. Finally, the landowner sends his own son in the expectation that the tenants will show him the respect they have denied the slaves who are his property. In fact, the son receives the same treatment as the slaves. He too is dispensable from the perspective of those wanting to seize “the inheritance”, those wishing to take control of the vineyard for their own purposes. As we reflect on gospel stories that take slavery for granted, we might commit ourselves to eliminating all exercise of power over others or over any “vineyard” entrusted to our care and to doing everything possible to address issues of systemic injustice.