

Children

For Primary School Children

Reading: Jesus told a story about people who were trusted to look after a vineyard but did not care for it as they should. Jesus teaches us to care for the gifts and responsibilities God gives us.

Recognising: Can you think of a person—a parent, a teacher or a grandparent—who trusts you to look after something and teaches you to take care of what you are given?

Draw or write about a Jesus person and how they taught you to take care of someone or something.

Responding: Father, I thank You for all the good things You have trusted me with.

Father, I am sorry for the times when I have not taken care of what I have been given.

Father, I ask for Your help to be responsible and thankful for Your gifts.

Resting: Remain silent for a few moments with the word 'care' in your heart.

Reflecting: God trusts us to care for His gifts.

Responsibility: **This week I will take care of what God has given me by...**

LECTIO DIVINA

Living the Word

A WEEK'S JOURNEY WITH THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year A - 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

A companion for encountering Jesus' love in everyday life.



Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43

You are invited to **read** the Gospel passage slowly, attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.

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 own 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 with these 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 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.'

Background to Gospel passage

Where does it happen? Jerusalem - the centre of Jewish religious and political authority.

When does it happen? Conscious that the end is near, Jesus knows it is time to speak truth to power.

Who is there? The chief priests and the elders of the people who have been entrusted with the care of the people - their well-being and their spiritual growth.

What happens? The landowner lovingly creates the vineyard and entrusts it to his tenants. But when he comes for the fruit, the tenants reject his messengers—even his son—because they want the vineyard and its fruit for

themselves.

Jesus' hearers are angry with the tenants, but they do not realise that they are also judging themselves.

Jesus reminds them that those given responsibility are called to care for God's people and creation. They are not owners, but stewards, and are accountable to God for how they care for others and for the world.

Recognising Stage (Meditate)

- ***Trust the Holy Spirit** at work within you.*
- ***Enter the Gospel:** When have I experienced something similar? What does it remind me of?*
- ***Let the Gospel and your memories speak to each other.***
- ***Notice where you encounter Jesus' loving presence today.***
- *If needed, **use the following prompts to awaken memories.***

"There was a landowner who planted a vineyard…"
Can you enter into the experience of the landowner by remembering a time when you gave your time, energy, love and hopes to others—only to feel let down or betrayed by those you trusted?
Or
"This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance."
Can you remember a time when you were entrusted with responsibility to serve others, but gradually became more focused on your own status and control, and began to resist those who questioned or challenged you?
Or
"They answered, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end .."'
Remember times when you have witnessed an abuse of power that has led to oppression, greed, poverty, racism, abuse or neglect, and you felt anger and pain at such injustice. In those moments, you were sharing in God's anger.

What memories come back to you? Listen deeply to your own life experience.

Where was it? When was it? Who was there? What happened?

(Some might find it helpful to journal their memory.)

I remember the time when…

Gen.25:16, 'Truly God was in this place and I didn't see it,' until now!

Prayer Response

***You are invited to respond in your own words, and where possible, together with some words from the passage.** Let the prayer flow from your recognition of the passage, or any part of it, in life experience. You might find it helpful to journal your prayer.*

Tell your Father how this passage and the memories it has evoked have awakened gratitude for the presence of Jesus in your life and in the world. Heavenly Father, I thank you…

The Gospel is always a call to repentance as well. Share with the Father your sorrow for the times when you, or a community you belong to, have fallen short in living this Gospel. Heavenly Father, I am sorry for...

Ask your Father for the help you need to live the Gospel more fully—in yourself, your family, community, Church and world. Heavenly Father, please give us the help we need to…



You are invited to deepen this prayer experience by resting your heart silently in God's presence and love. The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage may help you on this journey to greater stillness and greater silence, e.g. "The keystone".

An Invitation to Reflect

From your journey with the passage in meditation and prayer, what new insight or understanding have you received about the true meaning of love or some expression of it, into what it means to be fully human, and how God's kingdom is being made present among us today?

Rest in this truth, hold it in prayer and trust that it will bear fruit in your life.

Thought for the week

The root cause of so much pain and suffering in this world is that human beings forget they are meant to be stewards, and not owners, of this world.

Responsibility

With God's help I will try to live this Gospel by....