

Reading for the Twenty Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

4th October 2026

First reading

Isaiah 5:1-7

‘The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel.’

Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard:

My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.

He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines;

he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it;

and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.

What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it?

When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?

And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured;

I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.

I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed,

and briers and thorns shall grow up;

I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,

and the men of Judah are his pleasant planting;

and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, an outcry!

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 80(79):9, 12. 13-14. 15-16. 19-20. R̥ Isaiah 5:7a

The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.

It stretched out its branches to the sea; to the River it stretched out its shoots.

Then why have you broken down its walls? It is plucked by all who pass by the way.

It is ravaged by the boar of the forest, devoured by the beasts of the field.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore; look down from heaven and see.

Visit this vine and protect it, the stock your right hand has planted, the son you have claimed for yourself.

And we shall never forsake you again; give us life that we may call upon your name.

Bring us back, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.

Second reading

Philippians 4:6-9

‘Practise these things, and the God of peace will be with you.’

Brothers and Sisters: Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise: think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me — practise these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel Acclamation

Cf. John 15:16

Alleluia, alleluia.

I chose you out of the world, says the Lord,
that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide.
Alleluia.

Gospel

Matthew 21:33-43

‘He will let out the vineyard to other tenants.’

At that time: Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, ‘Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence round it and dug a wine press in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than at first. And they did the same to them. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.” And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’

They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes”? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Our God is a God who trusts his workers. Just as the landowner gave the tenants a fully equipped vineyard in which to work and produce, God creates the possibilities for work, fruitfulness and success for us too. He provides us with opportunities and resources and trusts that we will make the most of these. Our own, personal vineyards are completely unique. Do we recognize how our lives are moulded by God? Do we recognize the opportunities and resources that God has given us? Have we experienced the freedom and trust that God gives us? Have we responded responsibly or have we responded similar to the tenants at times?

The first reading from Isaiah echoes this truth. The friend of Isaiah owns a fertile hillside, he spades it, he clears it of stones, plants the choicest vines, builds the traditional watchtower, installs the typical wine press and then anticipates an excellent and abundant harvest. What he gets instead are wild grapes. We feel the pain of unrequited love in the second half of the reading of Isaiah. We feel the pain of a broken heart acting out in anger—an earthy, illustration of the disappointment God feels in his people who have not acted justly and with compassion to the lowly and oppressed.

The Gospel story describes reality, then and now. Injustice leads to desperation, desperation to violence, and violence to yet more violence. The more we have, the more we have to protect. There is a strong message here for society today—and for the church and its leaders. Who delivers the fruit?

With so much violence in the news, our mind could be overcome with the powers of evil. We need what St Paul says: “beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”