

PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

*Serving St Benedict's, St Mary's & St Oswald's,
Warrington*



27th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
4th October 2020

Entrance Procession

Music: All are welcome – Marty Haugen

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
who in the abundance of your kindness
surpass the merits
and the desires of those who entreat you,
pour out your mercy upon us
to pardon what conscience dreads
and to give what prayer does not dare to ask.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

(Isaiah 5: 1-7)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

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.

The word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80

The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

- 1 A vine from Egypt you transplanted;
you drove away the nations and planted it.
It put forth its foliage to the Sea,
its shoots as far as the River.
- 2 Why have you broken down its walls,
so that every passer-by plucks its fruit,
The boar from the forest lays it waste,
and the beasts of the field feed upon it?

Gospel Acclamation (Lourdes)

Gospel

(Matthew 21: 33-43)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

R. Glory to you, O Lord.

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.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Bidding Prayers

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Music: View Me Lord – T Campion & Richard Lloyd

Prayer over the Offerings

Accept, O Lord, we pray,
the sacrifices instituted by your commands
and, through the sacred mysteries,
which we celebrate with dutiful service,
graciously complete the sanctifying work
by which you are pleased to redeem us.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Eucharistic Acclamations

Sanctus En Fa Majeur – Lourdes

The Mystery of Faith

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,
until you come again.**

Communion Rite

Music: This is my will – James Quinn SJ

Prayer after Communion

Grant us, almighty God,
that we may be refreshed and nourished
by the Sacrament which we have received,
so as to be transformed into what we consume.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Concluding Rite

Distribution of Communion

Music: Beauty for Brokenness – Graham Kendrick

Acknowledgements

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Reflection on the Gospel

By Susan O'Halloran

A parishioner of St Anne's, Ormskirk

Following directly on from last week's Gospel, we have another parable based around a vineyard. Here, a landowner develops and gives a vineyard to tenants to cultivate, expecting that he will get a good return. However, the tenants seem to have come to look on the produce as theirs. They mistreat the slaves sent to collect it. When the owner sends his son, presuming that they will respect him, they want even more, the vineyard itself, and murder the son and heir.

How does this relate to us? I presume that Jesus is continuing to speak to the scribes and Pharisees, again indicating that they may not be doing the will of God as they think they are. Are we in danger of complacency, assuming that, as Catholics, we must be doing the will of God? Are we the tenants who forget

who has made and given us the vineyard we cultivate – God's Creation, in all its wonder? Pope Francis wrote about his concerns in his 2015 letter to the world *Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home*. He urged us then to grapple with the crisis of climate change and the damage we are doing to the Earth through pollution and destruction.

What has this got to do with our faith and our lives as Catholic Christians? How much do we hear about Creation Time, the period he established from 1st September to 4th October, which closes today on the feast of St Francis of Assisi? This is a season of prayer and action on the climate crisis and its impact on Our Common Home, which Pope Francis wrote about so eloquently.

We have known we are treating the Earth badly for a long time. In 1824, the French physicist Joseph Fourier described the Earth's natural "greenhouse effect". In 2013, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (or IPCC for short) reported that scientists were 95% certain that humans are the "dominant cause" of steady warming of the Earth since the 1950s. I was born in 1954. My generation, who have lived through a period of peace and prosperity which our parents and grandparents did not experience, have enjoyed our comfortable lives at the cost of the crisis we face now. We have all given our sisters and brothers in the many poorer areas of the world, and children and young people everywhere, a frightening future. And not just the future – the crisis is here now – think of the floods and fires around the world and the record high temperatures we have seen in the UK this summer. I have my father's school atlas from the 1930's, which has weather information from all over the UK. Temperatures rarely went above 21°C (70°F), even in the middle of the summer.

The climate crisis continues relentlessly, and is easy to forget, while other events occupy us. All our lives continue to be affected by the coronavirus pandemic. It has caused such devastation that it is hard to see that any good can come of it. Recognising the impact of the virus, and the need to Build Back Better, and bringing together our response to both issues, Pope Francis has exhorted the church to Prepare the Future, a better world in the wake of the pandemic.

This may be our opportunity to grow the fruits of the Kingdom. We tend to look towards the life after our time on Earth, but we also, as Pope Francis has made very clear, have a great responsibility to care for our Common Home and all her other inhabitants and all life – our comfort is at the cost of so many of our brothers and sisters, not to mention the animals and plants whose homes and habitats being destroyed for our lifestyles.

It will not be easy to make the radical changes that are needed and, like Jesus, we will come up against many powerful interests. But his challenge to us is there and Pope Francis has spelt out what we need to do. What a great way to witness to our faith and build the kingdom of God.