

Here's a text if you've only a minute ...

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

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

Though many, we are one bread, one body, for we all partake of the
one Bread and one Chalice. *Communion Antiphon*

Father, your love for us surpasses all our hopes and desires.
Forgive our failings, keep us in your peace
and lead us in the way of salvation.
Old Opening Prayer

This week's readings:
Isaiah 5: 1–7; Ps. 80 (79); Philippians 4: 6–9; Matthew 21: 33–43



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PREGO LEAFLET

Twenty-seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time
Year A, 4th October 2026

'The peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts in Christ Jesus'

The Season of Creation draws to a close today on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. It is fitting that throughout this Sunday's readings, the vineyard is used as a way of illustrating our relationship with God. Isaiah (**First Reading**) uses a song of love to describe how God cares and protects us, his precious vines. Although we remain rooted in that love, we may not always produce the fruit of God's love. The **Psalm** uses the same vineyard imagery. It is a song of repentance and longing to return to God's protection.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus uses the image of the vineyard to illustrate how God's radical message of love, professed by ancient prophets and by himself, has been ignored and rejected. Despite this, Jesus can confidently proclaim the truth: that what people have ignored will become the foundation of a new covenant of love.

Paul's letter to the Philippians (**Second Reading**) assures us that through prayer and thanksgiving we need not be afraid, because our hearts and minds are guarded in Christ Jesus. We will bear good fruit when we set our hearts on what is true, honourable, just, pure and lovely in the Lord.

May Christ Jesus, who forever guards our hearts and sustains us in his love, give us the courage and strength to lead lives centred on truth, justice, peace and compassion for all.



Opening Prayer

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.

Second Reading Philippians 4: 6–9

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.

God is always with me. In this time of prayer I make it my intention to become more aware of God's presence within and around me.

I take a few moments to settle my body and mind, and in doing so become still within this presence.

When I am ready, I slowly begin to read this passage. With an open and curious heart, I notice where my attention is drawn in the text. What am I being invited to notice?

It may help my prayer to read this as a letter of Christian love addressed directly to me. '[My name:] *Do not be anxious about anything ...*

Finally, [my name,] whatever is true ...'

After hearing all these words, what am I being invited to think about?

I spend some time pondering:

what is true ... honourable ... just ... pure lovely commendable?

The writer wants me to be free of fear and anxiety: to know that the God of peace is with me, and listens to my requests. Perhaps it is not so easy for me to be free of fear and worry? I ponder why this is.

I imagine Jesus sitting with me as I read through this letter, addressed to me. I share my thoughts and feelings about my prayer with Jesus, as I would to a dear and trusted friend.

I listen as Jesus reminds me of what words and deeds of peace and comfort I have received, heard and seen in him.

I hear Jesus bless me with '*The God of peace be with you.*'

I finish my time of prayer with words of gratitude.

Gospel Matthew 21: 33–43

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.'

Knowing that all that I have and all that I am comes from God, and with trust in God's love for me, I place myself before God and become still in the presence of divine love.

I slowly read this passage a few times over. Using my imagination, I may like to place myself in the scene, sitting amongst the chief priests and the elders. With them I listen to Jesus's teaching.

Perhaps I am being challenged to recognise the wide range of servants in the vineyard of the Lord today.

Do I always recognise the work of the Lord around me? Do I recognise the presence of Christ in all people, or only in those I want to?

If the vineyard of the kingdom is being entrusted to me, what part might I play in enabling it to flourish?

I listen to what Jesus desires for me to hear, and then, with Jesus, I close my time of prayer as we say together, '*Our Father ...*'