

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OCTOBER 4TH, 2026 | MASS PREP & SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PACKET

IN THIS PACKET:

Mass Readings

Short Reflection

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MASS READINGS

Reading 1: Isaiah 5:1-7

Let me now sing of my friend,
my friend's song concerning his vineyard.
My friend had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside;
he spaded it, cleared it of stones,
and planted the choicest vines;
within it he built a watchtower,
and hewed out a wine press.
Then he looked for the crop of grapes,
but what it yielded was wild grapes.

Now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard:
What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I had not done?
Why, when I looked for the crop of grapes,
did it bring forth wild grapes?
Now, I will let you know
what I mean to do with my vineyard:
take away its hedge, give it to grazing,
break through its wall, let it be trampled!
Yes, I will make it a ruin:
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
but overgrown with thorns and briers;
I will command the clouds
not to send rain upon it.
The vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah are his cherished plant;
he looked for judgment, but see, bloodshed!
for justice, but hark, the outcry!

The Word of the Lord.

MASS READINGS

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

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.

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

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?

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Once again, O LORD of hosts,
look down from heaven, and see;
take care of this vine,
and protect what your right hand has planted,
the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

Then we will no more withdraw from you;
give us new life, and we will call upon your name.
O LORD, God of hosts, restore us;
if your face shine upon us, then we shall be saved.

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

MASS READINGS

Reading 2: Philippians 4:6-9

Brothers and sisters:

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters,
whatever is true, whatever is honorable,
whatever is just, whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious,
if there is any excellence
and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.
Keep on doing what you have learned and received
and heard and seen in me.
Then the God of peace will be with you.

The Word of the Lord.

MASS READINGS

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people:

"Hear another parable.

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard,
put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower.
Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey.

When vintage time drew near,
he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce.
But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat,
another they killed, and a third they stoned.
Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones,
but they treated them in the same way.
Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking,
'They will respect my son.'

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another,
'This is the heir.

Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.'

They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?"

They answered him,

"He will put those wretched men to a wretched death
and lease his vineyard to other tenants
who will give him the produce at the proper times."

Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures:

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
by the Lord has this been done,
and it is wonderful in our eyes?

Therefore, I say to you,
the kingdom of God will be taken away from you
and given to a people that will produce its fruit."

The Gospel of the Lord.

SHORT REFLECTION

The image of the vineyard runs through these readings as a picture of God's generous care. God prepares the soil, removes obstacles, plants what is good, and patiently waits for fruit. Yet Isaiah names the fruit God desires with striking clarity: judgment and justice, not bloodshed and cries of suffering. Jesus intensifies this message in the parable of the tenants. Everything entrusted to us—our influence, relationships, opportunities, gifts, ministries, and responsibilities—belongs ultimately to God. We are not owners, but stewards called to return a harvest shaped by faithfulness, justice, mercy, and love.

Paul shows us how that faithful fruit is cultivated from within. Rather than allowing anxiety, resentment, or fear to direct us, we bring everything to God through prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. We deliberately set our minds on what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and gracious—and then put those things into practice. The readings ask us not only whether we have received God's gifts, but also what our lives are producing through them. God's peace grows in people who prayerfully receive his grace and faithfully bear fruit for others.

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

1. Lead as a Steward, Not an Owner

The vineyard belongs to the landowner, not the tenants; likewise, a leader holds responsibility as a trust from God rather than a possession to control. Healthy leadership serves the mission, the people, and the good entrusted to it.

2. Measure Success by the Fruit of Justice

God looked for judgment and justice from his vineyard, not merely outward growth or activity. Leaders should ask whether their decisions protect dignity, address harm, and create conditions in which people can flourish.

3. Receive Correction Without Resisting the Messenger

The tenants rejected and harmed the servants sent to them because they did not want to surrender their self-interest. Faithful leaders remain open to difficult feedback, truth-tellers, and correction—even when it challenges their preferences or authority.

4. Replace Anxiety With Prayerful Discernment

Paul directs believers to bring every concern to God through prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. Leadership becomes steadier when decisions arise from prayerful discernment rather than from panic, pressure, or the need to control outcomes.

5. Model What You Want Others to Practice

Paul tells the Philippians to continue doing what they had learned, received, heard, and seen in him. A leader's strongest influence comes not only from instruction, but from a visible pattern of integrity, peace, gratitude, and justice.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where do you see yourself most clearly in the vineyard image: as someone cared for by God, a steward entrusted with responsibility, or someone being called to bear greater fruit?

2. Isaiah says that God looked for justice but found suffering and outcry. What might “the fruit of justice” look like in our homes, workplaces, parish, or community?

3. What gifts, responsibilities, or relationships has God entrusted to you that you may sometimes treat as though they belong only to you?

4. Paul connects peace with prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. What anxiety do you most need to bring honestly to God this week?

5. What would it mean, in a practical way, to focus your mind on what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and gracious?

ACTION COMMITMENTS

_____ **1. Identify the Fruit**

Each day this week, name three specific gifts from God before bringing your needs or worries to him in prayer.

_____ **2. Choose One Act of Justice**

Identify one concrete way to respond to a need, unfairness, exclusion, or burden faced by another person rather than looking away.

_____ **3. Examine Your Stewardship**

Reflect on one area of responsibility—at home, work, ministry, or community—and make one change that treats it more clearly as God's trust.

_____ **4. Receive Honest Feedback**

Ask a trusted person for one piece of honest feedback about how your leadership or presence affects others, and listen without defending yourself.

_____ **5. Direct Your Mind Toward What Is Good**

Replace one recurring source of negativity, comparison, or anxiety this week with Scripture, prayer, gratitude, or a deliberate act of encouragement.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, you have entrusted us with abundant gifts and patiently cared for us as your vineyard. Give us grateful hearts, peaceful minds, and the courage to bear the fruit of justice, mercy, and faithful love; may all we receive from you be returned in service to your kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.