

Parishes of Mater Dei Blakehurst & St Raphael's South Hurstville

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary time Year A Bulletin

8th Oct 2023

Entrance Antiphon : Cf Esther 4:17

Within your will, O Lord, all things are established, and there is none that can resist your will. For you have made all things, the heaven and the earth, and all that is held within the circle of heaven; you are the Lord of all.

First Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

The vineyard of the Lord God of hosts is the House of Israel.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 79:9. 12-16. 19-20. R. Is 5:7

- (R.) The vineyard of the Lord is the House of Israel.
- You brought a vine out of Egypt; to plant it you drove out the nations. It stretched out its branches to the sea, to the Great River it stretched out its shoots. (R.)
- 2. Then why have you broken down its walls?It is plucked by all who pass by. It is ravaged by the boar of the forest, devoured by the beasts of the field. (R.)
- 3. God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see. Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. (R.)
- 4. And we shall never forsake you again: give us life that we may call upon your name. God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved. (R.)

<u>Second Reading</u>: Philippians 4:6-9 Do these things and the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel Acclamation See John 15:15

Alleluia, alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. Alleluia!

<u>Gospel</u>: Matthew 21:33-43 He leased his vineyard to other farmers.

Communion Antiphon: Lam 3:25

The Lord is good to those who hope in him, to the soul that seeks him.

REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

This week's gospel must be read in conjunction with the first reading (Isaiah 5:1-7) and the responsorial psalm, because the message of these passages is implicit in the parable told by Jesus. As soon as Jesus began to describe the vineyard – fenced around, a winepress dug and tower built – his audience would have immediately known that he was reflecting the Isaiah description of Israel as the vineyard of the Lord. Isaiah's condemnation of Israel in that passage is so strong that one can almost imagine Jesus' audience cringing in anticipation of where this story was leading.

The imagery Jesus used would have been so familiar to his audience that it was almost mundane, and yet Jesus, as usual, gives the image a twist. He describes a vineyard owner whose tenant farmers rebel, beat and murder his servants. Any one of these acts was punishable by death and the audience may well have expected the story to end there. And yet the landowner sends further messengers – hopeful of a change of heart from the tenants and allowing them the opportunity to do what is right. After these messengers are also murdered, the landowner sends his own son to collect the harvest from the tenants.

Jesus, of course, is drawing on the familiar image of Israel as the vineyard of the Lord. God, the landowner, has entrusted this beautifully prepared land to the people of Israel and yet they have taken ownership for themselves and forgotten their Lord. Messengers, in the form of prophets, have been sent to call the people back to God but they were ignored and even murdered. Now, the Son has been sent to the people and received much the same response. When Jesus asks his audience of chief priests and elders what the landowner should do, they are acutely aware that he is asking them how God should deal with them.

Scriptural context – Fulfilling prophecy

Matthew's whole recount of this parable is dependent upon the reader/ listener's familiarity with earlier writings within the Old Testament. We are fortunate that the designers of the lectionary have included the relevant passages as the first reading and psalm for this Sunday's readings. The original audience would have drawn on their own familiarity with the texts and recognised Jesus' words as echoing those of Isaiah and the psalmist. Matthew's gospel was particularly keen to cast Jesus in the image of fulfilling the prophecies of the Jewish tradition. Throughout Matthew's gospel we see the author placing the words of prophecy in Jesus' mouth or using the narration to confirm that Jesus performed actions to fulfil the words of the prophets.

Have you thought? The benevolent landowner

One of the images from this gospel that would have been puzzling to the audience, and may have tipped them off that Jesus was telling a parable with a particular message, is the image of the landowner being incredibly benevolent and tolerant of his rebellious tenants. Jesus' audience would have known that the law was always on the side of a landowner over his tenants. Any misdeed by a tenant farmer would have been dealt with swiftly and severely and yet the landowner in Jesus' story (God) is almost unbelievably patient and prepared to give the tenants every opportunity to do the right thing.

UNITED IN FAITH, GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT NOURISHED BY THE EUCHARIST, COMMITTED TO PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL WE STRIVE TO LIVE AS GOD ASKS "to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with God' (Micah 6:8)

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	St Raphael Church		Mater Dei Church		Every Thursday night MATER DEI CATHOLIC CHURCH 6:30 pm Rosary, 7:00 pm Praise and Worship and						
Tues				9:15am Mass		Reconcilia	tion, 7:3	-	or Mass or Adoration	V	
Wed				8:45am Rosary, 9:15am Mass	Novena			<u>Date</u>	<u>s to Remember</u>		
				St Michael's Cha	rismatic	Oct 5	The Spir	rit of the Euc	harist (Video)	Fr Dave Pivi	nka
Thurs	hurs 9:15am Mass		prayer group (see program)		Oct 12		Healing Mass Fr Thor				
Friday	ay 7:30pm Adoration		9:15am Mass		Oct 19 Oct 20	Ũ	lisation of Sp		Abraham Ge Ron Maldigr	U	
Sat	4:30pm Reconciliation 5:00pm Vigil Mass		No Mass during School holidays.			tholic W	-	Catholic Mission o			
Sunday	8:00	0am Mass		10:00am Mass			023 PULPIT F	POINTS		Y	
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The fifty-dollar bill reminisced about its travels all over the country. "I've had a pretty good life," the \$50 proclaimed. "Why I've been to Las Vegas and Atlantic City, the finest restaurants in New York, performances on Broadway, and even a cruise to the Caribbean." "Wow!" said the one-dollar bill. "You've really had an exciting life!" "So tell me," says the fifty, "where have you been throughout your lifetime?" The one dollar bill replies, "Oh, I've been to the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, the Catholic Church..." The fifty-dollar bill interrupts, "What's a church?"



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