Sunday Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 21:33–43: The Parable of the Tenants

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.”

Focus Questions

1. What does the landowner do after he plants a vineyard, digs a winepress, and builds a tower?
2. What does the landowner do when vintage time draws near?
3. What do the tenants do to the servants that the landowner sends them?
4. Whom does the landowner finally send to the tenants and why? What do the tenants do to the person the landowner sends them?
5. What do the chief priests and the elders say the landowner will do to the wretched tenants?
6. What will happen to the stone that the builders rejected?
7. To whom will the Kingdom of God be given?
The Parable of the Tenants

Directions: Read the following information and complete the list. Then complete the reflection.

In the Parable of the Tenants, Jesus compares the son of the landowner with the stone the builders rejected. This parable is about Jesus Himself: The crucified Christ is the cornerstone the builders rejected. The world rejected Jesus’ message and put Him to death the same way the tenants put the landowner’s son to death. But Jesus explains that even though the stone was rejected and cast away, it became the cornerstone, the very foundation of a building. It is precisely through His suffering on the Cross, doing His Father’s will, that Jesus bore fruit, and we can too!

List three concrete ways you can bear fruit in your life this week. (For example, putting off playing your favorite game so that you can play another game with your younger sibling. Instead of buying your daily latte, donate that money to charity. Shorten your TV time so you can pray a decade of the rosary first.)

1. 
   
2. 
   
3. 
   

Now do those three things this week!

Reflection: Scripture not only describes Jesus as the cornerstone, but also as a stumbling block to those who do not have faith. Read the following scripture passages and then respond to the prompt in 1–2 paragraphs.

Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it says in scripture: “Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a cornerstone,
chosen and precious, and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame.” Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” and “A stone that will make people stumble, and a rock that will make them fall.” They stumble by disobeying the word, as is their destiny. (1 Peter 2:1–8)

But we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. (1 Corinthians 1:24–25)

**Why you think the crucified Christ is a stumbling block to those who do not have faith?**

**What do you think St. Peter means by saying that we should allow ourselves to be built into a spiritual house?**