

REFLECTION FOR FRIDAY 2ND WEEK OF LENT.

Gen 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28 Matt 21:33-43, 45-46

Today's Gospel reading tells us a lot about God and us.

God is portrayed as a landowner who sets up a vineyard. He generously supplies all that is necessary for the vineyard to produce a good harvest.

This tells us of human privilege. The vineyard was equipped with everything. God has given us this world and blessed us with everything. Everything in your life is a gift from God.

Are we grateful to God for the precious gift of life? Are you grateful for God blessing you with a wife/husband, children, family, friends, your job, etc.,.

Make gratitude part of your life and you will sleep better. Grateful people sleep better.

The people of Israel had been treated in a privileged manner by God. He had bestowed on them the sort of love and care that a dedicated vine dresser bestows on a vineyard. But privilege brings responsibility. They were meant to produce the fruits of right living. Sadly, they failed.

+God looked for peace from his people, and got war

+for true worship, and got idolatry

+for justice in their dealings with one another, and got injustice, corruption, and exploitation of the poor and the weak

+for goodness and got evil

+for caring and sharing and got and acquisitiveness

+for community and got exclusiveness and snobbery

+for humanity and got pride

+ for wise and godly living and got a pagan lifestyle.

Yet God didn't give up on them. He sent messenger after messenger to them (the prophets). But far from listening to them, they abused some of them and killed others. God was disappointed in them, not for his own sake, but for their sake. They squandered the blessings he wanted them to enjoy.

This to some extent is our story too. God wants us to make use of the gifts and opportunities he has given us so that we can grow as his children. But often we fail to respond to his love. And yet, God doesn't write us off, but gives us chance after chance.

We fail not just as individuals but as Church. the Christian community is the vineyard Christ planted and for which he gave his life. He looks to us, we Christians, the tenants of his vineyard, to produce the fruits of justice, love and peace. It's a great privilege but a great challenge.

May we Christians strive to fill our lives with every thing that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise.

May our lives produce the fruits of justice, love and peace.

Fr Patrick