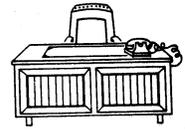


27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 4, 2020



From the Desk of
Fr. Romanus

This Sunday's gospel parable is an indictment of those who put Jesus to death and those responsible for the death of the prophets before him. There is a striking contrast between the generosity of the landowner and the greed of the tenant workers.

The landowner did everything to ensure that the vineyard was productive and looked forward to reaping the fruits of his investments in vintage time. The workers, on the other hand, were greedy and discontent with their pay. They wanted the entire vineyard to themselves. Their greed had murderous consequences as they killed all the messengers from the landowner who were seeking to obtain his produce. To top it off, the workers killed the landowner's son, presuming they would inherit the vineyard. It is hard to understand their logic and how they intended to get away with murder.

Jesus got the crowd to admit that the landowner would put the wicked workers to a wretched end and lease out his vineyard to responsible tenants. He also made sure the audience understood that the parable was about them. This is typical of juridical parables whereby the parable invites the hearers to pass judgment on themselves. We are all workers in God's vineyard in our various roles in the Church, at home and at the workplace. To avoid suffering the same judgment before God as these parable workers, we need to jettison greed in all its forms and strive for contentment and gratitude for the privilege of work.

Feast of St. Francis – blessing of pets:

This Sunday is also the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, but it was suppressed because it fell on a Sunday. St. Francis was known for his love for animals, birds, and all of God's creation. In accordance with our past celebrations of this feast, there will be the blessing of pets at 6pm.

Here are some thoughts about the life of St. Francis. He was born in Assisi in about 1181 and was baptized in his father's absence with the name Giovanni. However, upon returning from a business trip to France, his father changed his name to Francis. Francis received rudimentary education and fought in the battle of Collestrada against Perugia in 1202.

Francis identified his encounter with a leper as the turning point in his life. Abandoning his family wealth and patrimony, he made his home among lepers and the marginalized. In them he found Christ, the suffering and crucified Lord. In 1205, he found a new direction for his life following the voice of the Lord from the cross asking him to rebuild his Church. Soon, he attracted a following and established a brotherhood that came to be known as the Franciscans.

The Franciscan movement grew rapidly, and soon Clare of Assisi became part of the movement and directed the development of the Poor Ladies of St. Francis. Seeking martyrdom, Francis traveled to Syria during preparations for the fifth Crusade against the Muslims. Unable to stop the attack, he became a witness to a failed Crusade in which thousands were killed. Francis traveled to the Muslim camp and attempted to convert Sultan Melek-el-Kamel.

Upon returning to Italy, Francis helped to put together the Rule of the Friars Minor. The final text of the Rule was approved by Pope Honorius III in the papal bull *Solet annuere*, in 1223. Francis celebrated Christmas by re-enacting the Nativity Scene with live animals and real people. He received the stigmata in 1224, and later composed the *Canticle of Brother Sun*, in which he invited all of creation to join in praising God. He died in 1226, and was canonized by Pope Gregory IX two years later, in 1228.

Have a great week!

Fr. Romanus