

**TWENTY-SEVENTH
SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
YEAR A**

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

O God,
Maker of all things and people,
your greatest gift
is to share your life and love.
Make us worthy of that gift
by our kindness and help
to our family and friends,
always considering their needs
before our own.
With all this,
help us to believe
more and more
that Jesus is your Son
and lives with you,
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Both of our readings focus on the rejection of God's message.

The first reading is a parable of the loving, caring owner of the vineyard who did everything possible for the vineyard. Even after God's constant loving care and grace, there are those who turn away. What more could God have done? God does not force a positive response.

The Gospel parable presents the same theme with more drama. Each time God sent a prophet, he and his message were rejected by God's chosen people. God never gives up. But even the most loving offer, God's own Son, is rejected!

What more could God have done? God does not force a positive response.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 5:1-7

This is a reading from the prophet Isaiah.

This is what Isaiah said to the people of God:

"My friend had a grape vineyard on a hillside.
And my friend planted the best vines
and took very good care of them
so that they would give good grapes.
But instead, the vines gave only wild,
bitter grapes that no one could eat."

Then God said,

"Now tell me, is there anything else
I could have done for my vineyard?
When I looked for good grapes,
why did it give me only wild and bitter grapes?"

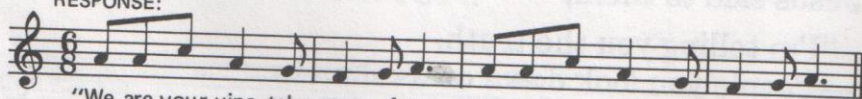
["Now I will tell you what I am going to do.
I am going to destroy that vineyard.
It will be covered with thorns and prickly bushes.
And I will not send any rain on it.]"

"My people, you are like that vineyard.
You are the ones I love. I did everything for you.
But when I looked to you for justice and fairness,
I found only evil and killing.
When I looked for goodness,
I found people crying because they are suffering."

The Word of the Lord.

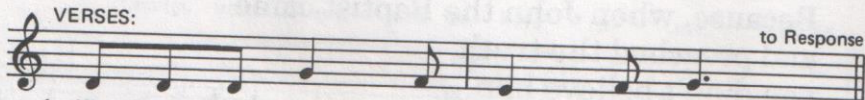
RESPONSE: Psalm 80

RESPONSE:



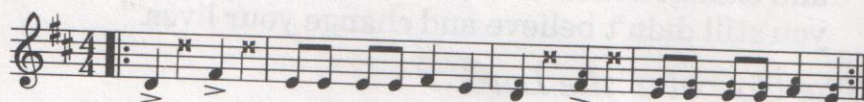
"We are your vine, take care of us. We are your vine, watch o-ver us."

VERSES:



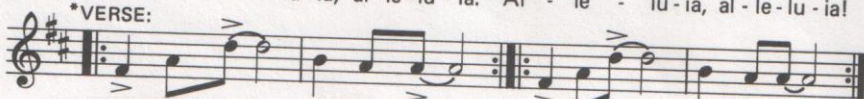
1. We have done wrong, but now we pray:
2. Save us O God, for now we pray:

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

*VERSE:



Plant your Word in our hearts. Let it bear fruit in us!

*Keep singing Alleluia line. Add the verse with a solo or small group.

GOSPEL: *Matthew 21:33-43*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

One day Jesus told this story to the chief priests and the leaders of the people:

"Once there was a man who owned a grape vineyard.

He built a wall around it to protect it,
and he put a tower in the middle of it
so he could watch over it.

Then he hired people to work there
and went to live in another country.

When it was time to pick the grapes,
the owner sent his servants

to collect his share from the workers.

But the workers beat the servants
and killed some of them.

Later, the owner sent more servants,
and they, too, were beaten and killed.

Finally he said,

'I will send my son,

for surely those workers will respect my own son.'

"But the workers said to each other,

'This son will be the owner someday,
and he will have all this property.

Let's kill him and take the property for ourselves.'

"So they took the son,

threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him."

Then Jesus said to the chief priests and leaders,

"Now what do you think the owner will do
when he comes back and finds out
what the workers have done?"

They answered,

"He will punish those wicked people
and give his vineyard to good people."

Jesus said to them,

["Remember what it says in the Psalms,

'The stone which the builders did not want
has become the cornerstone.']

"Now I tell you, the reign of heaven
will be taken away from you who do evil
and will be given to good people who do what is right."

The Gospel of the Lord.

[] Reader may omit text that appears in brackets.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Be sure the children realize that this parable (story) is being addressed to those who rejected Jesus and not to his followers. There is a call to all of us in every parable, but the children need not identify with those who knowingly rejected Jesus.

Ask the children to recall the story.

Invite them to allegorize by asking questions such as:

- Who is the owner?
- Who are the people the owner sent to collect the grapes?
- Who are the workers?
- What did they do? Why?
- Who did the owner send last?
- What do you think that means?
- What did the workers do?

If you read the passage in the brackets, remind the children that we sang this verse from the Psalm during Easter.

"The stone which the builders rejected is the cornerstone."

God invites us to be the "good people" who do what is right—who accept Jesus, the Son of God.