Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Gospel text (*Mt* 21:33-43): 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."

"Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, 'They will respect my son.'"

Fr. Jorge LORING SJ
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Today, we contemplate the mystery of the rejection of God in general, and of Christ in particular. It is surprising to see the repeated resistance of humans to God's love.

However, today's parable refers more specifically to the rejection the Jews had towards Christ: “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” (Mt 21:37-39). This is not easy to comprehend: it's because Christ came to redeem the entire world, and the Jews were waiting for their own "messiah" to grant them dominion over the entire world...

When I was in the Holy Land, I was given a tourist brochure of Israel that featured the most famous Jews in history: from Moses, Gideon, and Joshua, to Ben Gurion, founder of the State of Israel. However, Jesus Christ was not in that brochure. Yet, Jesus has been the most well-known Jew in history: he is recognized worldwide, and it's been two thousand years since he died...

Over time, great figures are admired, but they are not loved. Today, no one loves Cervantes or Michelangelo. However, Jesus is the most loved in history. Men and women give their lives out of love for Him. Some through martyrdom, and others "drop by drop", living only for Him. There are thousands and thousands throughout the world.

And Jesus has had the most significant influence on history. Values now accepted everywhere have Christian origins. Not only that, but it is also evident that there is a growing closeness to Jesus Christ, even among Jews ("our elder brothers in faith," as said by Saint John Paul II). Let us specifically pray for the conversion of the Jews, for this people with its great values, when converted to Catholicism, can be of immense benefit to all of humanity.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "Love Sacred Scripture and wisdom will love you; love it tenderly, and it will protect you; honor it and you will receive its caresses. May it be for you as your necklaces and your earrings" (Saint Jerome)

- “On the Cross Jesus does not speak of comparisons: He is Himself” (Benedict XVI)

- “To his accusers' question before the Sanhedrin, "Are you the Son of God, then?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am" (Lk 22:70). Well before this, Jesus referred to himself as "the Son" who knows the Father, as distinct from the "servants" God had earlier sent to his people...” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 443)