

Monday of the Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 12,1-12): Jesus began to speak to the chief priests, the scribes and the elders in parables. «A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the wine press and built a watch tower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenants and went abroad.

»In due time he sent a servant to receive from the tenants his share of the fruit. But they seized the servant, struck him and sent him back empty-handed. Again the man sent another servant. They also struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent another and they killed him. In the same way they treated many others; some they struck and others they killed. One was still left, his beloved son. And so, last of all, he sent him to the tenants, for he said: ‘They will respect my son’. But those tenants said to one another: ‘This is the one who is to inherit the vineyard. Let's kill him and the property will be ours’. So they seized him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

»Now, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others». And Jesus added, «Have you not read this text of the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the keystone. This was the Lord's doing; and we marvel at it’».

They wanted to arrest him for they realized that Jesus meant this parable for them, but they were afraid of the crowd. So they left him and went away.

«Sent a servant to receive from the tenants his share of the fruit»

Fr. Alphonse DIAZ
(Nairobi, Kenya)

Today, our Lord invites us to have a walk on his vineyard: «A man planted a vineyard (...) and (...) he leased the vineyard to tenants» (Mk 12,1). We are all tenants of this vineyard. The vineyard is our own soul, the Church and the whole world. God wants fruits from us. First, our personal holiness; then, a constant apostolate with our friends, who will be encouraged by our example and word to get closer to Christ every day; finally, the world, that will become a better place to live in, if we sanctify our professional work, our social relations and our duties towards the common good.

What kind of tenants are we? Those who work hard or those who get annoyed when the master sends his servants to collect the rent from us? We may oppose those in charge of helping us give the fruits God expects. We may object to the teachings of the Holy Church and of the Pope, the bishops, or perhaps, more modestly, those of our parents, our spiritual director, or a good friend of ours who is trying to help us. We may even become aggressive, and try to wound them or even kill them through criticism and negative comments. We should examine ourselves about the real motives of such an attitude on our part. Maybe we need a deeper knowledge of our Faith; maybe we need a deeper knowledge of ourselves, a better examination of conscience to discover the reason why we do not want to produce fruits.

Let us ask Our Mother Mary to help us work with love under the guidance of the Pope. We can all be “good shepherds” and “fishers” of men. «Let us (...) ask the Lord to help us to bear fruit, a fruit that abides. Only thus is the earth transformed from a vale of tears into a garden of God» (Benedict XVI). We can carry our souls, or that of our friends, or the whole world closer to Jesus Christ, if we only read and meditate the teaching of the Holy Father, and try to put them into practice.