



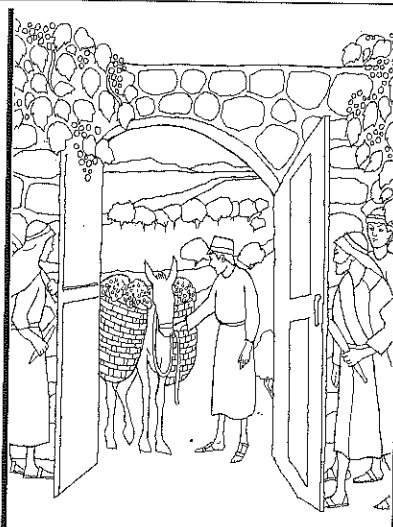
27TH SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME

RESPONSE: Psalm 80

"We are your vine;  
take care of us.  
We are your vine;  
watch over us."

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

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



EVALUATION

We are providing this brief evaluation form for use after you have celebrated this Sunday's liturgy with the children.

Notes for future reference:

What went well?

What needs improvement?

LITURGICAL SEASON BACKGROUND

We continue, during these closing weeks in Ordinary Time, to reflect on how God reigns with justice and compassion. Last week, on the 26th Sunday, we heard the story of the two sons, one who promised to obey his father but did not, and the other who said he would not do what his father asked but, upon reflection, changed his mind and did what his father had asked. God always forgives those who return.

This Sunday we hear another parable, about a vineyard owner who sent his servants and then his own son to collect his share of the harvest from the workers whom he had hired. But the workers kept the harvest for themselves and killed servants and the owner's son.

Next Sunday we will hear another parable, about the king who held a wedding feast for his son and when the invited guests failed to come, he sent his servants to invite whomever they met, both good and bad people.

These readings continue to fill out a picture of how just and merciful is the reign of God. So are we to treat one another, with justice and mercy, as we work in the vineyard of God's kingdom.

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

Both readings for this Sunday are about people who reject God. The reading from Isaiah is one of the few Old Testament parables. Here, Isaiah likens the people of God to a vineyard which, although well tended, yielded sour grapes. The Gospel reflects this parable, and it is tempting to think Jesus had it in mind. In this case, the parable is not about the grapes but about the workers in the vineyard. The point of both parables is the same. Both reflect the frustration of a loving, caring God who does all that is possible to make things work, even becoming one with us in Jesus, to personally show us the way.

As with parables, the messages that can be drawn are multiple. In addition to revealing the patient, merciful love of God, we can see how God invites us to be responsible for creation, to care for it and to share its abundance with one another. We are not to abuse these gifts or use them out of self-service and greed. Such behavior brings down destruction.

LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The environment for Ordinary Time is simple, featuring a candle, a plant or group of plants, and perhaps some incense. The liturgical color of the season is green. You might display the SUNDAY Scripture Poster which, this week, is an illustration of the Gospel, showing the

## 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A

workers in the vineyard waiting to kill the son of the owner. The poster could be sent home with a different family each week to color for the next celebration. The book of God's word, displayed facing the assembly, is the focal point of the gathering space.

### CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG

You might use the same centering/gathering song for several Sundays during this season. *Suggestions:*

- "Psalm 103: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song* #39, Treehaus Communications). Children can sing the refrain with the following gestures:

**The Lord is kind . . .** (*Cross hands over heart.*)  
**. . . and merciful.** (*Extend hands outward in a gesture of giving. Repeat gestures when line is repeated.*)  
**Slow to anger,** (*Cross right hand over heart.*)  
**rich in kindness,** (*Cross left hand over heart.*)  
**the Lord is kind and merciful.** (*Extend hands outward again in a gesture of giving.*)

- "Sing to the Mountain" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #29, Treehaus Communications). You may wish to follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.
- "Somebody's Knockin' at Your Door" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song* #15, Treehaus Communications). Children can sing the refrain. A fitting gesture might be to mime knocking at a door each time that phrase is repeated.

### FIRST READING *Isaiah 5:1-7*

The reader may be either a child or an adult; in either case, the person should know ahead of time in order to prepare carefully. This text might be read in a narrative style, as one would tell a story. The warmth of God's care should be conveyed through the tone of voice.

### PSALM RESPONSE

The psalm is not only a response to the first reading; rather, "responsorial" is descriptive of the way the psalm is prayed, with the children responding to the cantor or leader. You might use the same psalm through several Sundays. *Suggestions:*

- "Psalm 80: We Are Your Vine" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader's Guide, Year A*, page 118, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word, Cycle A*, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

- "Psalm 95: If Today You Hear God's Voice" (*Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #37, Treehaus Communications).
- "Psalm 19: Lord, You Have the Words" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #39, Treehaus Communications).
- "Psalm 122: I Rejoiced" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #6, Treehaus Communications).

You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Suggestions:*

- "Plant Your Word In Our Hearts" (Walker, *SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children* and *SUNDAY Weekly Leader's Guide, Year A*, page 118, Treehaus Communications; *Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word, Cycle A*, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).
- "Halle, Halle, Halle" (Caribbean, *Vol. 1 Sing God A Simple Song*, #43, Treehaus Communications).
- "Salesbury Alleluia" (*Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song*, #41, Treehaus Communications).

You might follow the gestures suggested in *Sing God A Simple Song*.

### GOSPEL *Matthew 21: 33-43*

Usually the presider reads the Gospel. This text can be read as one would tell a story, varying tone of voice in keeping with the emotions that the dialog suggests. Dramatic emphasis, however, should call attention to the story and not to the storyteller.

### HOMILY OUTLINE

See the *SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide, Year A*, pages 118 and 119, for "Focus of the Readings" and "Reflecting on the Readings With Children." When reflecting on the scriptures with children we take our cues from the children's responses. In so doing, you might use some of the questions below to enrich their appreciation of God's word.

WE LISTEN TO GOD SPEAK

- What might the children in the assembly hear God saying to them in today's readings?
- How might you engage the children in the biblical experience with open-ended questions?

*Examples for this week's readings:*

*Concerning the first reading*

- Why do you think Isaiah told a story in which he spoke of God as a friend who owned a vineyard?
- Why do you think Isaiah thought of God's people as a vineyard?
- How do you think God felt when the vineyard produced bitter grapes that no one could eat?
- What does Isaiah's story tell you about who God is?
- What do you think Isaiah meant when he said that God found only evil and killing instead of justice and fairness?

*Concerning the Gospel:*

- What does this story tell you about who God is?
- Why do you suppose the owner put a watch tower in the middle of his vineyard?
- How would you think the workers felt about working in this vineyard?
- Why do you think the owner sent more servants after the workers beat and killed some of the first ones? Why do you think he then sent his son?
- What do you think made the workers so mean?
- What would you have done if you were the owner?
- How do you think the chief priests and leaders felt about hearing this story? How do you think they felt about Jesus?

WE REFLECT ON THE REIGN OF GOD

- How can you invite the children to look out of the biblical experience at their lives today?
- How can you use the biblical imagery of today's readings to explore with children their experience of God's presence in our lives today?

*Examples for this week's readings*

*Concerning the first reading*

- What would you do if you raised some vines that gave you bitter grapes that you could not eat?
- What is it like for you to work hard at something and then not have it turn out very well?
- What do people do today to plant the seeds of justice and fairness in the vineyard of God's world?
- God says to us, "You are the ones I love. I did everything for you." In what ways have you felt God's love? What is that like for you?
- What are some of the evil things that God sees today in the vineyard of God's world? Who are some of the people God sees crying from their suffering?
- What is it like for you to see people being treated unfairly?

*Concerning the Gospel:*

- If someone were to use something that belonged to you and then tried to keep it, what would you do?
- The workers in the vineyard were supposed to serve the owner. Instead, they tried to take over the vineyard and keep everything for themselves. How do people today think only of themselves, keep everything God has given them for themselves, and do nothing to serve God?
- How do people today work in service to God?
- In what way does the work you do serve God? What is it like for you to serve God in the vineyard of God's world?
- Like the servants and the son of the vineyard owner, people today are rejected from sharing in the fruits of God's world. Who are some of these rejected people? How are they rejected?
- In what way do people today reject God and fail to return what rightfully belongs to God?



## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

- How might you attune yourself to encourage the children's own creative responses to God's word?
- How might the Spirit be moving the children to respond to God's word in praise and thanksgiving?

*Examples for this week's readings:*

*Concerning the first reading:*

- What can you do to plant the seeds of justice and fairness in the vineyard of God's world today?
- What are some things we can do to help people who are suffering?

*Concerning the Gospel:*

- As workers in God's vineyard, in what ways can we serve God?
- What can we do to share what we have made with others?
- Jesus is like the son of the vineyard owner who was rejected and killed by the workers. What can you do to share with people who are rejected?

## CREED

Invite the children to profess their faith by creedal statements that echo the readings. Reflect on what the readings say about God as Creator, Jesus as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as the Giver of Life. Express these statements so that the children can give their assent to them. This week's readings, for example, offer these options:

- God, who tends to us like the loving owner of a fine vineyard; who treats people with fairness and mercy.
- Jesus, who helps us to understand the way to live in the kingdom of God.
- Holy Spirit, who helps us to see what is right and to be just and fair.

## PRAYERS OF FAITHFUL

The proclamation of the word leads us to change our lives and express our gratitude in the celebration of the Eucharist. After the children have offered their prayers and concerns, you might also offer petitions based on the scripture texts. See notes for the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time for guidelines on preparing petitions. In formulating the prayers, you might draw from the verbs or "action words" and biblical images in this week's readings. For example: *care, love, watch over, look for goodness, hire, collect, send, give.*

*NOTE: Arrange to have the Sunday Scripture Leaflets given to the children as they are leaving Mass. Encourage the children and parents to use these leaflets through the week to continue reflecting prayerfully on God's Word. In addition, emphasize the use of the Light of the World, Our Family Spiritual Life Journal, pages 112 and 113, (Treehaus Communications, Inc.) as a way of assisting the family's deeper reflection on God's word at home.*



**CENTERING / PROCESSIONAL SONG**

• "Sing to the Mountain" (Vol. 2 Sing God A Simple Song, #29, Treehaus Communications).

*Substitutions/Additional Notes:*

**OPENING PRAYER**

*Presider:* O God, you care for us as tender plants in your vineyard. Help us to produce good grapes for you. We pray in the name of Jesus, your Son and our brother.

*All:* Amen.

*Substitutions/Additional Notes:*

**FIRST READING** *Isaiah 5:1-7*

*Today's Reader:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Presider:* Isaiah tells us today how lovingly God attends to us.

**PSALM RESPONSE**

*Presider or Song Leader:* We sing to God in joy for God's loving care.

*Substitutions/Additional Notes:*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

• "Plant Your Word In Our Hearts" (Walker, SUNDAY Book of Readings/Lectionary Adapted for Children and SUNDAY Weekly Leader Guide, Year A, page 118, Treehaus Communications; Music for Children's Liturgy of the Word, Cycle A, Treehaus Communications/O.C.P. Publications).

*Substitutions/Additional Notes:*

**GOSPEL** *Matthew 21:33-43*

*Today's Reader:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Preliminary Comments:* Jesus tells a story about who will be given the kingdom of God.

Liturgy Celebration for October 2, 2011 • 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A

# 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A



## HOMILY

*Focal Points:* God treats us as tender vines, helping us to grow and to produce good fruit. But often our fruit is bitter and cannot be eaten. Those who produce good fruit will inherit the kingdom of God. We are not only cared for by God, as tender shoots, we are also like hired help in God's vineyard. We are not the owners. We work so that the kingdom of God can flourish and grow and yield good fruit for the glory of God. Those who work for their own glory instead of the glory of God cannot live in God's kingdom.

*Outline:*

## CREED

Let us proclaim our faith in God who cares for us as tender vines.

• Do you believe in God, who is just and fair and provides for all we need?

*All:* Yes, we believe! *Or:* Yes, we believe in God, who . . .

• Do you believe in Jesus, who teaches us the way to serve God and to live in the kingdom of God.

*All:* Yes, we believe! *Or:* Yes, we believe in Jesus, who . . .

• Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives us the strength to be fair and loving.

*All:* Yes, we believe! *Or:* Yes, we believe in the Holy Spirit, who . . .

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

*Presider:* **Our God is always caring and fair. So do we offer our prayers to God with grateful hearts.** (*After the children have offered their prayers, you might also add petitions based on today's scripture texts. For example:*)

+ **May the leaders of all nations serve and care for all people with justice and kindness; we pray.**

*All:* Hear us, O God of loving care.

+ **May the people in our churches treat one another fairly and welcome all who come to share in the harvest of God's love; we pray.**

*All:* Hear us, O God of loving care.

+ **May our care for one another at home and in our neighborhoods bear sweet fruit for the glory of God; we pray.**

*All:* Hear us, O God of loving care.

*Substitutions/Additional Notes:*

## CLOSING PRAYER

*Presider:* **O God, you have trusted us to care for all that you have created. Help us to be good workers in your vineyard. May we remember to share with all people the harvest of your love as Jesus shares with us now the Sacred Food of life everlasting.**

*All:* Amen.

*Substitutions/Additional Notes:*

NOTE: Arrange to have the *Sunday Scripture Leaflets* given to the children as they are leaving Mass. Encourage the children and parents to use these leaflets and the *Light of the World, Our Family Spiritual Life Journal* throughout the week.

Liturgy Celebration for October 2, 2011 • 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year A

**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: to Response



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.*

[1] 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.