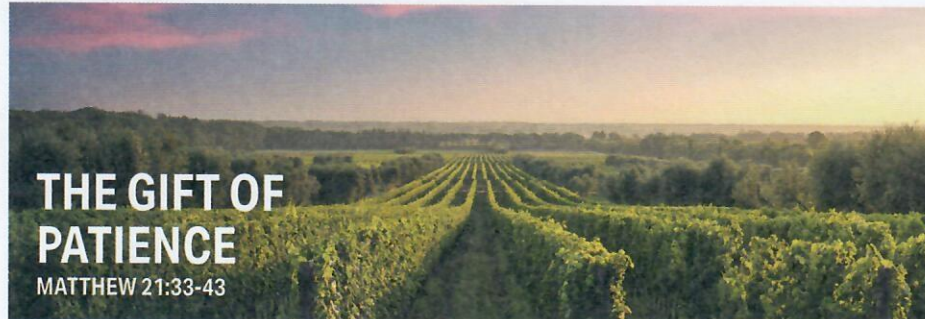


Sunday Message

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 4 October 2026 • Psalter Week 3



THE GIFT OF PATIENCE

MATTHEW 21:33-43

St Matthew uses the parable in today's Gospel to summarise the story of God's relationship with God's people. The characters in the story are symbolic. The landlord represents God, the tenants are the people of Israel, and the servants are the prophets, whom God has continually sent to Israel to remind the people of their true destiny. All of them were rejected and despised.

Finally, God sends his son Jesus, who, like the son in the parable, will be murdered by those to whom he came. The landlord will punish the tenants by leasing the vineyard to new tenants. This is Matthew's way of telling his readers that the kingdom of God will be given to the Gentiles, the outsiders, as it were, those who weren't part of the original story. Since the Son has been rejected by the people he came for, he must go to others instead.

The parable is also a reminder of God's patience. In the Old Testament, the people of Israel kept turning their backs on God. But God never gives up on them, never abandons them. Over and over again, God makes allowances for them and forgives them. This is what distinguished the God of Abraham from other gods of antiquity, who were indifferent, capricious, and casually cruel. Israel's God is the God of endless patience, of infinite second chances, always ready to welcome the prodigal home. In the end, God even sent his son among us to save us, to lead us home.

Jesus displayed similar patience. People resisted his message; many opposed him; even his closest friends misunderstood him. He must have been desperately frustrated and disappointed with them, but Jesus never gave up on them. Even after Peter denied him three times, Jesus welcomed him back.

God shows that same patience towards each one of us. Even when we keep letting God down and turning our backs on him, even when we disappoint and exasperate him, God is always ready to forgive and forget, to accept us with open arms. ■

DO

Try to be more patient with people at home, at work, and on the roads this week.

SAY

'Lord, I thank you for your patience with me. Help me to draw closer to you every day. Amen.'

PRAY

In today's fast-paced, super-competitive world, practising patience has never been more challenging. Pray for the virtue of patience, if you need it.



LEARN

God never stops giving us the chance to turn back towards him.

God always sees the good in us, our potential; God never rejects anyone.

God's message is intended for everyone.

REFLECT

There's no doubt about it, practising patience has never been more difficult. We live in a culture of wanting things now, one of instant gratification. Waiting is a challenge. And not just the sort of anxiety-filled waiting we're obliged to do in an overcrowded A&E, but any kind of waiting. Many of us suffer from road rage, all for the sake of gaining a few extra minutes. Having to sit at a red light annoys us; being stuck in a barely moving queue frustrates us. If our internet connection is down or slow, we get angry. Regular broadband is no longer sufficient; we need high-speed broadband. We're intolerant of inconvenience and discomfort.

The letter 'I' in 'internet' stands not just for me, the individual, but also for instant

- instant access, instant news, instant communication, instant entertainment, instant titillation - available immediately, right now, this very second. As with instant messaging, instant coffee, and ready-made meals, we demand immediate results, and we want them now.

It can be the same with our relationships. If a relationship is in difficulty, we can be tempted to give up on it. Caring for sick or elderly loved ones can test our endurance, our tolerance. If things start to go wrong for us professionally - maybe there are problems at work, or a promotion isn't coming, or our ambitions are being frustrated - we can get angry or feel like quitting.

So also with our religion. Scandals in the church, impatience with the pace of reform, or disappointment with the clergy can leave us feeling fed up and inclined to walk away. When God is slow to answer our prayers or doesn't appear to answer them at all, we can be tempted to stop praying or even to abandon God altogether.

Our pilgrim journey requires patience. Despite our best efforts, we're not going to become saints overnight, become perfect in a flash, reach heaven unscathed. We are human; we are frail; we make mistakes; we flounder and founder. Knowing that God is always patiently with us, walking alongside us every step of the way, we learn to be patient with ourselves and patient with each other. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Within your will, O Lord, all things are established,
and there is none that can resist your will.
For you have made all things, the heaven and the earth,
and all that is held within the circle of heaven;
you are the Lord of all.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
who in the abundance of your kindness
surpass the merits and the desires of those who entreat you,
pour out your mercy upon us
to pardon what conscience dreads
and to give what prayer does not dare to ask... **Amen.**

FIRST READING Isaiah 5:1-7

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Let me sing for my beloved
my love song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill.
He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
and he looked for it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.
What more was there to do for my vineyard,
that I have not done in it?
When I looked for it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.
I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and briars and thorns shall grow up;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the men of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
and he looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed;
for righteousness, but behold, an outcry!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 80(79):9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20 R. Isaiah 5:7a

R: The vineyard of the LORD is the house of Israel.

1. You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
It stretched out its branches to the sea;
to the River it stretched out its shoots. **R.**
2. Then why have you broken down its walls?
It is plucked by all who pass by the way.
It is ravaged by the boar of the forest,
devoured by the beasts of the field. **R.**
3. God of hosts, turn again, we implore;
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the stock your right hand has planted,
the son you have claimed for yourself. **R.**

4. And we shall never forsake you again;
give us life that we may call upon your name.
Bring us back, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved. **R.**

SECOND READING Philippians 4:6-9

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.

Brothers and sisters: Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise: think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me – practise these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL cf. John 15:16

R: Alleluia, alleluia.

I chose you out of the world, says the Lord,
that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit
should abide.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 21:33-43

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence round it and dug a wine press in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than at first. And they did the same to them. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son." But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance." And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?'

They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.'

Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes"? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, we pray,
the sacrifices instituted by your commands
and, through the sacred mysteries,
which we celebrate with dutiful service,
graciously complete the sanctifying work
by which you are pleased to redeem us... **Amen.**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Though many, we are one bread, one body,
for we all partake of the one Bread and one Chalice.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant us, almighty God,
that we may be refreshed and nourished
by the Sacrament which we have received,
so as to be transformed into what we consume... **Amen.**