

### Living the Word: Isaiah 5.1-7

The prophet gives us a stark impression of the ways in which we can sometimes fall short of what the Lord envisions for us in this passage, sometimes known as the Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard. There are plenty of reasons why we might not be as fruitful in our share of the soil of the faith that we have been given to till. But we must never lose heart, nor must we stop aiming for that plentiful harvest. It is certain that on the last day, we will be called to account for the lives we have led, and the use of the skills that are ours. Is the Lord calling you, or someone you know, to do more for the sake of His kingdom? Are we merely keeping things ticking over until someone else comes along, or are we really doing all we can with what we have?

### From the Fathers:

**From a sermon of St Wilfred (c. 634-709) Bishop & Missionary**

**Feast Day: 12th October**

Keep in mind and recall to the brethren those days of old, how we read in the Old Testament that God's beloved patriarchs and his firstborn, Israel, "passed from nation to nation and from one kingdom to another", awaiting the promise and not despairing. Moses too, and Aaron and all the prophets of God endured men's persecution, for their trust was in the Lord. In the New Testament we read how the great Shepherd of the Sheep and Head of the whole Church, Jesus Christ, was crucified by the Jews and his disciples scattered. Later dispersed throughout the entire world, they and their followers after various tribulations received the crown of martyrdom. They did not forget those words of comfort which are addressed to us too as His sons, in the epistle to the Hebrews: "My son, neglect not the discipline of the Lord; neither be thou wearied whilst thou art rebuked by him, for whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth and he scourged every son he receiveth," so brethren and helpers in Christ, in the words of the same epistle, "Let us also who have so great a cloud of witnesses over our head run with patience the race that is set before us."

8<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



In today's Gospel, Jesus gives us the Parable of the Tenants. It tells of a landowner who plants a vineyard and then rents it out to tenants who fail to look after it as they should and when messengers are sent by the landowner they are killed, as is the landowner's son. Consequently, the landowner brings them to a wretched end and gives the land to someone who will make it bear fruit. On one level, we can read this as a parable about those elders of the people at the time of Christ who failed to look after the people of God, God's treasured possession. Not only do they fail to look after what they have been entrusted with but they also kill the prophets and the Son sent to them. But today's Gospel can also be a challenge to us. As members of the Church, the Body of Christ, we are entrusted with the care and protection of all that God gives us – each other and the world. Are we going to be like those who simply laud things over others or are we going to generously and, with God's aid, be faithful stewards on his behalf?

*Today's Gospel: St. Matthew 21: 33-43*

### 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. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.*