

Twenty Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

*Do you believe the World is the way God wants it to be? Now, let me ask a different question. Is the World the way YOU would like it to be? Maybe you came to the conclusion "No, of course not."*

*If all of us believe that the world isn't the way we want it to be, then why **doesn't** the world look different? Why doesn't the world look more like the world we **want**, the world we **hope for**, the world we **dream about**?*

**In our First Reading** today Isaiah uses a parable of a Vineyard to display how in his day God had poured out blessings on the people of Israel hoping for a positive response - hoping they would produce Good Fruit. All God received in return was wild grapes, ingratitude, greed, and **Violence!**

**In Gospel Jesus** uses the same parable of the Vineyard in talking with the Chief Priests and the Elders of his day. He likewise shows how they had been blessed beyond measure and how God was hoping for a fruitful response. That was not the result. In return once again all God received was ingratitude, greed, & VIOLENCE. JESUS stung their **consciences** by telling them they were no better than their ancestors who killed all the prophets and because they in turn were soon to kill him. Could there be anything more VIOLENT than to kill the son of God?

**The point is** that you and I, that is the Church, are now the New Israel. We too have been blessed beyond compare with the Living word of God, the Sacramental life, especially Baptism and the Eucharist. We have been placed in the vineyard of this world / USA precisely to produce the Good Fruit of Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, Generosity, Fidelity, Forgiveness, Mercy, Compassion, and all that is

good, holy, and true. The question is, when we stand before the judgment seat of God Will he find a peacemaker or a person of Violence?

**Isaiah** calls attention to the violence in his day. Jesus calls attention to the Violence of his day. Today, these two readings called our attention to the violence that has been around our world & our country. These readings appeal to anyone caught in this situation to acknowledge their need for the strength and healing of Jesus.

**It is easy to point fingers** at Violence out there whether it is Minneapolis, Chicago, or New York, or a multitude of other places. Today's scripture invites us to look inward, to take a look at the hidden Violence that may exist in our hearts. Could it be that we are blind to the violence of:

- Wishing others bad luck?
- Spreading rumors about others, being super critical, judgmental, or negative.
- Refusing to talk to someone, giving them the cold shoulder treatment.
- The list is endless. The Good News is that Jesus is All Merciful and He simply instructs us to overcome evil by doing Good.
- It is our responsibility. We cannot justify or blame others for any violence in our country and in our world.
- Pope Paul VI sums today's scripture up well by saying, "If you want peace, work for justice."

And when we take seriously our responsibility to **tend the Vineyard faithfully**...beautiful things will happen, **beautiful fruit will be borne**, a beautiful world /America will become a more visible reality...little by little through every act of love, however great or small.

Does **God** want a better world? Do **we** want a better world /America?