# Video Service 4th October 2020​ Proper 22A Trinity 17

In the name of the Father,​
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.​  **Amen.**​

Welcome in the name of Christ to this time of worship together.

We live in a time which is both challenging and also an opportunity to be the person we would like to become and help to change the world around us, step by step.

The Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

**Let us rejoice and shout for joy,**

**giving God the glory.**

Glory to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

**as it was in the beginning is now**

**and shall be for ever. Amen.** *cf Revelation 19.6,7*

​**Opening Song:** ​ **All Heaven declares** *(Robin Mark)*

[**https://youtu.be/S-s9Kk6tfVU**](https://youtu.be/S-s9Kk6tfVU)

​**The Gospel Reading**​

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Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew

***All***   **Glory to you, O Lord.**​

**Matthew 21.33-end The Parable of the Wicked Tenants**

33 ‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. 34When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. 35But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. 37Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” 38But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” 39So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ 41They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

42 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 amazing in our eyes”?
43Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.\* 44The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’\*

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. 46They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.​

***All***   **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Homily**​: Suzanne Bray shares some thoughts on the Gospel reading

**The Parable of the Tenants and the Vineyard**

Have you ever heard children fighting over a toy? – “It’s mine!” “No it’s not, it’s mine!” – or a family after the funeral of a relative quarrelling about the deceased’s will and who was going to get the most valuable of their possessions? Or people complaining about income tax on the pretence that “the Government is taking our money!” It’s unfortunately only too easy to find examples of people who seem to think that everything should belong to them.

The parable of Jesus in today’s Gospel reading was told in a specific situation – Jesus was warning the religious authorities that he knew about their plans to get rid of him and was letting them know that there would be horrendous consequences if they did so. However, the parable also has at least two wider meanings that are also relevant to us in the 21st century.

God is the creator of the world and the head of his people (both the community of Israel in the Old Testament and the Church today). The world and the Church belong to him and he has entrusted them to us – just like the vineyard owner entrusted his vineyard to the tenants. This means he has the legitimate right to have a say in how they are managed and cared for. He lets us benefit from them, but on the clear understanding that they do not, ultimately, belong to us.

As tenants and managers of this world, we can use the riches the earth produces, but not keep them for ourselves as individuals if God asks us to give some of them back to him or share them with those in need. As tenants of the Church, neither the church’s material wealth and possessions nor the people who come to faith within the Church belong to us, but to God – we cannot tell people how to run their lives or use the Church for our own ends.

But it is so tempting to do so – to say that my house, my money and my possessions are mine and I can do exactly what I like with them. And for church leaders to behave as if the Church belongs to them and that they can do everything the way they think fit, forgetting they are there to serve God and the community. In these cases, it is also easy to behave aggressively or just be disagreeable with those who remind us that we are God’s tenants and that we need to share, to give generously and to do things God’s way, not our own.

In Jesus’s time, the refusal to listen led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, together with the unnecessary deaths of many people, while God’s plan for the world went forward using the disciples of Jesus who truly followed God’s instructions.

So how about us – as individuals and as a church? In this time of crisis, do we need to listen again to God’s reminder that we are his tenants and managers, answerable to him for how we use what he has entrusted to us? The world is not ours and the Church is not ours. So let’s take the time to remember and discover God’s plans for all we have. Not to spoil our fun, but to avoid disaster and help build a world and a Church which will be a blessing to everyone.

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**Prayer for Others**

(inspired by Psalm 19:14)

Creator God, we come before you

asking prayers for those who lead

nations

cities

churches

homes.

*As you poured out your love in the Word*

*may we hear your word and follow;*

*may the words of our mouths*

*and the meditations of our hearts lead us*

*to you.*

Holy One, we come before you -

a people broken into shards of lives

sick,

poor,

hungry

hidden by the limitations of our eyes.

Help us to see as You see

*As you poured out your love in the Word,*

*may we hear your word and follow*

*may the words of our mouths and*

*the meditations of our hearts lead us*

*to you.*

God of Mercy, we come before you –

seeking to live as you command, but often failing,

and thus we are torn by

cries of despair

anger

power

control

lost to foolishness and

stumbling blocks

despite your love in the Word

*Help us to hear your word and follow*

*May the words of our mouths*

*and the meditations of our hearts lead us*

*to you.*

Gentle God, we come before you

giving thanks for all our blessings

the gift of life

hope

faith

love

family

friends

all we care for this day.

Help us to be Your hands.

Incline Your heart, O gracious God, and teach us to love

O Christ, our rock and our Redeemer.

Amen.

​Jesus is our high priest, tempted like us, yet without sin.

He lives for ever in heaven to intercede for us.

Through him we approach the throne of grace

with confidence,

and confess our sins.

**God of mercy,**

**we acknowledge that we are all sinners.**

**We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said**

**and done,**

**and are mindful of all that we have failed to do.**

**For the sake of Jesus, who died for us,**

**forgive us for all that is past,**

**and help us to live each day**

**in the light of Christ our Lord. Amen.**

​May God who loved the world so much

that he sent his Son to be our Saviour

forgive us our sins

and make us holy to serve him in the world,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**​

**The Collect**​ Trinity 17

​ Almighty God,

you have made us for yourself,

and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:

pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,

and so bring us at last to your heavenly city

where we shall see you face to face;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

**The Lord’s Prayer**​

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As we join our prayers with the Church Universal, so we say, each in our own language, the prayer that Jesus taught us​,

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

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**Blessing**

Eternal God,

our beginning and our end,

accompany us in our journey.

Dawn on our darkness,

open our eyes to praise you for your creation

and to see the work you set before us each day.

Take us and use us

to bring to others the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing….

**Notices**

Thank you for continuing to join me for this time of worship, please hold us in your prayers as we re-imagine church, listening to God speaking to us. And of course thank you for your continued financial support 😊

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**Song: Go light your world**

[*https://youtu.be/TUTWR4vVIjU*](https://youtu.be/TUTWR4vVIjU)