

## **The Parable of the Wicked Tenants**

There seems to be so much human suffering. In recent weeks we have witnessed devastating hurricanes, fires, and other natural disasters. Now this past week, we once again have experienced the senseless massacre of human life. Why does this keep happening, and why does God allow such atrocities to occur? Well, I think we can find part of the answer in this weekend's Gospel reading, the parable of the wicked tenants.

The tenants *chose* to abuse the responsibilities and gifts that were entrusted to them. They also *chose* to hurt or kill anyone who got in their way, including the vineyard owner's son. However, the vineyard owner doesn't throw in the towel, so to **speak**, and become resentful and angry. No, he perseveres, confident that he will find those who will care for his land and produce fruit. (*Did you notice the similarities here between God the Father and the vineyard owner, and the vineyard owner's son and Jesus?*)

God gave us all free will. Free to *choose* either good or evil. What we witnessed this week was pure evil. But what we also witnessed, as we always do when something horrible happens, are exceptional human beings who run towards the danger, not thinking of their own safety, but the welfare of people they don't even know. The Lord will always find and send his servants to help.

Like the vineyard owner, we cannot lose hope and become discouraged, resentful or fearful. Rather, we should remember the words of St. Paul to the Philippians "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:6-7).

The wicked tenants only had selfish intentions which obviously were not part of God's plan. God has a purpose for each and every one of us. To help us accomplish this purpose, we are all given certain gifts that He wants and expects us to use. Let us use the gifts and talents the Lord has bestowed upon us for good, holy and honorable deeds. Our world is in desperate need of true spiritual healing and renewal. What part will you play in helping our world to heal? St. Catherine of Siena wrote "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire." Let's get the kindling burning!