

*Homily for Friday of the 22nd Week in Ordinary Time
St. Thomas the Apostle Parish – West Springfield, Massachusetts
September 6, 2019*



Scripture Readings: Colossians 1:15-20 ✕ Psalm 100:1-5 ✕ Luke 5:33-39

Jesus made brilliant use of imagery to describe what is important in life. He compared His ministry to new wine; then He said that this new wine required new wineskins. In other words, the traditional way of doing things would no longer be enough. Yet, Jesus also had great respect for His tradition, for His own Jewish tradition, and the Scriptures of His people, all of which nourished and inspired Him.



In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus declared that He came not to abolish the Law and the prophets but to complete them.¹ He did not pretend to be starting from scratch. There was much in Jewish tradition that He valued, but He wanted to bring that tradition to a greater richness and fullness; He came to renew Israel's tradition, not to toss it aside. His attitude suggests that we don't simply discard our religious tradition, but neither should we idolize it into a set of static rules and practices.

The Church is always in need of reform and renewal; the new wine of the Holy Spirit will always require new wineskins. The work of renewal will always involve honoring what is best in our tradition by allowing its rich potential to be fully realized. ✕

¹ Matthew 5:17