

Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

Suggestions for Leading Worship



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RE: Liturgical Suggestions for the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A

Sunday date: October 4-5, 2008

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

An Overview...

Focusing on the Gospel: Mt 21:33-43 (Lectionary 139-A)

The Good news of this Gospel is that the kingdom will survive no matter how the “tenants” act, because the cornerstone is Christ. This provides a metaphor for our own living. No matter in what shape the vineyard of our own lives is – whether we need pruning or we seem to be in a dry desert – if we keep our eyes on Christ as the cornerstone of our own lives, we will be fruitful, enjoy being tenants in God’s kingdom, and not fear judgment. A message of judgment is often hard for us to hear. However, it is an essential aspect of the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and calls us to accountability for the way we live.

We need not fear judgment because, just as God cared for the vineyard in Isaiah, so God cares for the vineyard of our lives. We are nurtured by God’s Word, fed a God’s table, helped by the commandment of love. All we need do is let God tend us and bring us to produce good fruit. All we need do is be faithful; God will take care of the rest.

(From *Living Liturgy 2007*, by J. Zimmerman *et al.*, Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press)

Questions for Sharing Faith...

1. How do I feel about being a tenant (not the owner) of God's vineyard?
2. As a co-worker in the Lord's vineyard, what fruit have I produced?
3. How do I view the judgment of God? What does Jesus mean when He says that the "kingdom of God will be taken away... and given to a people that will produce fruit?"

Some Other Considerations as you Prepare...

1. Sample Penitential Rite, form C:

Lord Jesus, you call us to a sincere love of God and a self-sacrificing love of neighbor: Lord, have mercy. .

Christ Jesus, you strengthen us for work in your vineyard: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, You challenge us to give ourselves completely to your kingdom: Lord, have mercy.

2. The alternate Opening Prayer is the more fitting for the Old Testament and Gospel Readings, since it speaks about having the "courage to stand before God's truth."
3. Consider using the Preface for Sundays in Ordinary Time III: "You came to our rescue by the power as God..." are the words of focus here.
4. Or the Preface for Sundays in Ordinary Time VII, which speaks of "God's gifts of grace lost by our disobedience and now restored by the obedience of Christ."
5. Today is "Respect Life Sunday." The USCCB has designated the first Sunday in October as a day to raise consciousness and provide resources that affect the dignity of all human life from conception through to natural death. For resources go the website www.nccbuscc.org/prolife/programs/rlp

Sample Intercessions for the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A

Priest: By prayer and petition and with thanksgiving, let us make our requests known to God.

Deacon (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. That the Church may preach the kingdom, not as its private possession, but as a gift for which the Lord will one day demand an account, we pray to the Lord.
2. For the leaders of our country, that God may make them strong and effective defenders of the poor, the unborn and the forgotten, we pray to the Lord.
3. For all mothers, especially those who are young or alone, beaten or addicted: that God might heal their broken hearts and seal them with his love, we pray to the Lord.
4. For families torn by violence, anger and pain, that God may preserve them in truth and teach them to sow justice and peace, we pray to the Lord.
5. For everyone who has grown old, that as shadows lengthen and evening comes, we may cherish them as precious gifts from God, we pray to the Lord.

[You may wish to continue to add intercessions for protection from hurricanes, for help in storm recovery, and for the protection of those in military/diplomatic service.]

6. That Christ may welcome home to paradise all who, like himself, have been unjustly condemned to death, especially all children murdered by abortion, we pray to the Lord.
7. That the challenging message of the parables may strengthen us to produce a harvest worthy of the Master's trust, we pray to the Lord.
8. That the kingdom of God may be given to our departed brothers and sisters, we pray to the Lord.

Priest: Just and merciful God,
You tend your people with unceasing care,
And do not abandon the vine your right hand has planted.
Cultivate your Church, we pray,
Enriching it always with new shoots,
So that, grafted onto Christ, the true Vine,
The community of your people may bear fruit in abundance
And produce a rich harvest for eternal life.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(from *Prayers for Sundays and Seasons, Year A*, by P. Scagnelli, Chicago, IL: LTP, 1997.)