

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Mt.21:33-42

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? (KJV)

God's Holy Church celebrates the Divine Liturgy today throughout the world. The Divine Liturgy is an opportunity for believers to experience, be united with and to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today's Divine Liturgy is occurring during the period in the Liturgical Year when the Church is commemorating the Dormition, the Falling Asleep of the Mother of God.

Though the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, experienced an earthly death, the Church recognizes and affirms that she continues to be with believers, She intercedes before the Lord God for those reaching out to her in prayer.

The Divine Liturgy is a continuous opportunity throughout earthly life for individuals to grow in Jesus Christ. The Divine Liturgy enables believers to remain united with Jesus Christ and be renewed in Christ.

Prayers to the Mother of God by believers facilitate Christian growth. Prayers to the Mother of God are constantly effective. The miracles of the Mother of God for the benefit of earthly believers are well accounted for in the Church's history.

Today's Gospel is a lesson in accountability for attentive believers. The householder held those working in the vineyard accountable for their work. The workers rejected the householder's efforts to share in the fruits of their work.

All persons live in the vineyard of the Lord and have been entrusted with a life of various blessings to be apply and multiply in daily life. Believers are accountable for using blessings received in ways pleasing to the Lord.

All believers will experience the Great and Final Judgment when each person will answer for the use of the blessings of his or her life. No one will escape the Great and Final Judgment.

Husbands and wives will answer to the Lord if their marriage was lived in harmony with each other and to the glory of God. Parents will be judged on whether their sons and daughters were raised in an atmosphere of love.

Parents will find the answers to the hardest questions in the Gospel. The Lord will determine if employers have been responsible and caring in the treatment of their workers. Workers will answer if they have been earnest and honorable.

The Gospel is always relevant to daily life. Life's lessons are present to be learned from the Gospel and have a primary place in shaping daily life. Lessons from the Gospel will lead a believer to life eternal.

Teachers in the classroom find wisdom in the Gospel. Nurses in medical facilities find strength and guidance in the Gospel. God's Holy Church is the Eternal University granting life-long learning experiences.

The hunger in the soul drives believers to cherish and always value the Gospel's nourishment. The Lord does not disappoint those turning to Him in faith. The Lord is ever-present and within reach through prayer.

The Lord offers hope in all life's circumstances. Even in the most tragic of circumstances the lessons of the Resurrected Christ can be found. The Divine Liturgy is a true and constant celebration of Jesus Christ's Resurrection.

Seekers of renewal in life and in Christ will find and experience nourishment in each Divine Liturgy. God cares for each person. Each person is valued in the Lord. Each person in the Lord's vineyard has something to give to the Lord in gratitude.

Blessings given to each person in the Lord's vineyard are to be returned to the Lord. The Lord entrusts each person with blessings to be used honorably. The Lord's return will reveal if each person has used his or her blessings with honor.

Persons returning the wealth of life's blessings unto the Lord will experience eternal life. Being irresponsible with the Lord's blessings leads to peril for the soul and will affect the Final Judgment.

Daily relationships in the home, the workplace and the community determine the Great and Final Judgment that will take place. Relationships between husband and wives are always under consideration by the Lord.

Fathers and mothers, family members and friends are accountable to the Lord for daily relationships. Employers and employees, teachers and students are accountable to the Lord in their relationships.

God's Holy Church is where to learn life's lessons. God's Church is where to learn the lessons for eternal life. The opportunity for learning never ends while the mind is functioning and is united with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Afterfeast of the Dormition. The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Apostle Thaddeus. Holy Martyr Bassa. Hieromartyr Raphael of Sisatovac. August 21. September 3, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic