

Theme of the Week - Time

Being followers of Jesus can sometimes make you think! At times when listening to the Gospel readings from Mass, you can listen and at the end go "I really don't know what that means?" Jesus taught people using stories so they could understand then, but so we can understand now. In Sunday's Gospel from Luke, Jesus tells us about giving one more chance to the fig tree to grow some fruit, give it time! And here we may ask what does this actually mean? What are we giving time too? What is Jesus trying to teach us? Just as the gardener is willing to look after the tree very carefully so that it didn't need to be destroyed, so too God is willing to give us another chance, with Jesus' help, to change and grow the fruit of God's love. And it is through God's love, His sacrifice of His son for our sins, that shows we too are given time by God to show the fruits of our worth and to illustrate the image of God through us.

In Scripture, the vineyard was often used as a symbol of God's people. The image of God is as the owner of the vineyard, who tends it with great care, planting, pruning, cultivating and feeding the plants to ensure they are fruitful and flourishing. Every means for fostering fruitfulness is offered to the barren fig tree, just as every opportunity is given to us to attend to our own need for repentance.

Sunday's Gospel leads us to reflect upon the mystery of God. God reaches out to communicate with us. As we think about our own personal encounters with God, we find the places of 'holy ground' in our life. And do we see that the ground of our daily existence is holy because of our service of Christ to others as we live our lives? When we consider the Gospel, we are brought to consider the role of the gardener and how this impacts our lives during this time of Lenten preparation. Cultivation requires care and attention - and often pruning. Pruning in our lives is usually a painful experience, but out of it comes healthy, strong growth. How can you be **Active** in cutting back on the material goods you prioritise in your life over God? How can you be more **Curious** in exploring how others you know and don't know have cultivated their life so they too can produce fruit?



From the Gospel of Luke (13: 1-9)

There were some present at that very time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.'

And he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vine dresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?" And he answered him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig round it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down." '

Prayer for the Week

Heavenly Father,

We come together at the start of this day, in quiet reflection, to make space in our lives for you. Allow us to listen in peace and calmness of this moment to your voice

Through Christ our Lord

Amen

Day 1

Who is the owner of the Vineyard?
What does the Fig tree in the vineyard represent?
How do are we given time by God to bear the fruit we all too can produce?

Day 2

How fruitful has your life been? How is your relationship with God? Are there areas of your life where you can be more Active and Curious to bear good fruit during this season of Lent?

Day 3

Each day three of each week in Lent will be given to pray three Scripture Stations of the Cross.
This week please pray:
Station 10: Jesus is crucified
Station 11: Jesus and the penitent criminal
Station 12: Jesus speaks to Mary and John

Catholic Social Teaching - Solidarity

By coming together in hope as individuals, families, communities, organisations and nations, we can achieve transformative change for the common good. When we unite and make a stand for what we believe in, we can achieve remarkable things

"I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security...while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: 'Give them something to eat' (Mark 6:37)." Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*,