

I HAVE CHOSEN YOU... THAT YOU MAY BEAR FRUIT...

Once again, the Word of God speaks of a vineyard; the Gospel and the First Reading, in particular, make special mention of it.

The prophet Isaiah sings a song of love for the vineyard, while St Matthew presents a parable in the words of Jesus.

First, we must distinguish between the CARE given to the vineyard and the FRUIT it yields.

Let us begin by stating that we understand the Lord's VINEYARD to be His CHURCH; it can also apply to the WORLD He created, and finally, it can be understood as our own SOUL.

The parable begins by mentioning the CARE the vineyard's owner lavished upon it: surrounding it with a fence, digging a winepress, building a watchtower, and so on.

The goal was for the workers—to whom it was leased—to produce an abundant harvest.

THE FRUIT is, evidently, the harvest obtained from the vineyard.

If we apply this to our own reality—viewing the vineyard as our Church—we see that God provides the necessary care for it to bear fruit.

This care consists of the Word of God (which we hear, at the very least, on Sundays), participation in the Eucharist, and the various sacraments; ultimately, it is the grace He grants us through each of them.

The fruit, then, should be our good works—the result of the care God has shown to each of us.

Yet sadly today, as the parable suggests, even though the Lord has invited us to work in His vineyard as stewards, we want to enjoy the fruits while leaving the Owner out of the picture.

The modern world often seeks to act independently of God. It wants to act like God yet exclude Him. They want to enjoy the vineyard but without its owner.

That is why, this Sunday, it is important to ask ourselves: what fruits are present in my life? What fruits do I discover in my church? What fruits do I discover in society?

If we are mindful of God's care for each of us, the result will be a church and a society grounded in values—one where the most vulnerable are cared for and protected.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary, Mother of Love, to grant us the grace to be good stewards in the vineyard of the Church, for the good of the whole world. Amen.