

## 27TH SUND. ORD. (A)

### THINK ABOUT WHAT IS EXCELLENT AND WORTHY OF PRAISE

When we get up every morning, no matter who we are, we have some sorts of anxieties. Parents think about what their children will eat, and meet their other expenses. Children think about how to pass their exams. Workers think about how the day's activities will go; while business men and women are thinking about how business will flourish, and how stocks will favour them. Retirees also think about how to spend the day without becoming bored.

The Christians in Philippi had similar anxieties, so St. Paul was telling them not to worry and be anxious about anything but to pray, and God would provide their needs and grant them peace. They were to focus their attention on what is excellent and worthy of praise. Their attention should be on good life; whatever is true, honourable, just and pure.

The Lord is disappointed in His vineyard (which represents the house of Israel) because it failed to produce fruit despite all the hard work. This means that the Israelites failed to live according to the statutes of the Lord. They did not think about what was pure, honourable, excellent and worthy of praise. They followed what was dishonourable. They failed to live a good exemplary life.

Jesus' parable of the vineyard is similar to the one in the first reading. The workers were led by greed to kill the messengers and the son of the owner. The owner was patient and continued to send messengers though they maltreated the first ones. In both cases the owners did what they could to get a good harvest, but there was disappointment because of the evil intentions of the labourers.

Anxieties and worries can lead us into doing things which are not pleasing to God. God has given us the necessary graces to be able to live a good life, but we think more about what we will get and thus leave behind what is noble and honourable.

We have received baptism and thus cleansed from what is unclean; we are fed with the body of Christ, and we have received the Holy Spirit to

teach us, guide us in the way of the Lord, strengthen us, speak for us, enlighten us, and pray within us, among other activities of the Spirit.

The graces bestowed upon us are great enough to help us know God and live in His presence all the time. Above all, He has given us His Son to be our Saviour and Redeemer, and when we pray in His name, we receive the things we are anxious of every day.

God has entrusted to us all that He created, to help us to survive and serve Him, but like the workers, we want to be our own masters leaving Him behind, worshiping the work of our hands. What is honourable is now relative, what is true is relative, what is pure is relative, what is praiseworthy is relative, and whatever is gracious is relative.

What kind of fruit is the Lord looking for? Have we given Him His share of the investment He has made in us? Jesus is the vine and we are the branches; we are grafted in Him, (Jn. 15:1-8). He gave us His body, and died to save us from the evil one; what has come out of all that, when we consider our way of life? We bypass the source of peace to seek peace and joy in empty pleasure and wealth. Those workers who thought they would have the vineyard for themselves, lost everything including their lives. This means that God is the ultimate power who controls everything, and in Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Parents are investing in their children, spending thousands of dollars in education and other things. What do you expect in the near future? Children, do you think you can offer something good in return to what you are receiving? Is the investment made in you by your parents and relatives going to be a waste or will it yield good profit? If you want to yield good fruit and not thorns or thistles, then don't gamble your life with premarital sex, alcohol, drugs and truancy. They have nothing to offer, but misery and hopelessness.