

# 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Dear brothers and sisters!

Today's Gospel reading tells us that God created the whole world - beautiful, wonderful, and surrounded it with His fortress and His providence. Everything in it was prepared to be a place of the Kingdom of God, that is, the Kingdom of mutual love and the Kingdom of joy. Today, we can analyze what people, with the support of demonic forces, have done to our world. A place where blood is shed, where inhumane, cruel acts take place - and not only on a large, global scale, but also on a family scale.

The parable of the evil vine workers paints a typical picture of Savior-era Palestinian peasant life. The long history of wars, seizures, enslavements, and power struggles, led to the impoverishment of the occupied population. Significant plots of land were taken by the Roman emperor and members of his family, prominent politicians and the military, who ruled on behalf of the occupying power. Usually, the owners lived in Rome, Damascus, or Jerusalem, and rented their land to the peasants, charging for part of the harvest. The revolutionary slogan, "land to the peasants," was popular among the population. From time to time, the peasants rebelled against the landowners, refusing to pay rent. Local uprisings were suppressed by the Roman army, severely punishing the disobedient.

Dear believers, in the ways of a good master, we see the Lord God, who has done everything necessary for man to sanctify and save himself. To do this, God gave man His instructions - commandments, and through Jesus Christ planted a new vineyard - the Holy Church and established in it the spiritual sources of his grace - the Holy Mysteries, to strengthen spiritual strength and protect against the wiles of the evil spirit.

On the other hand, the parable of the vine workers shows the important participation of man in the work of his own salvation. Man's participation in God's work of salvation must be reflected in the concrete manifestations of the spiritual life, so that our sanctification may be reflected in the various circumstances of our lives and change us for the better.

Folk wisdom says, "What matters is not what you have, but who you are," and the world applies this wisdom in reverse, what you have is so valuable. Man has value and dignity in himself, regardless of material things. What he has, what he does, whether he has arms and legs, or not, because he has in himself the image of God and an immortal soul.

Human ingratitude is based on the fact that man, in principle, does not deny God, but still tries to build his own life without God. Man wants to organize his life the way he wants, not the way God arranged it.

Dear believers, our lives are changing as much as we are changing ourselves. Man changes as he becomes open to God and makes personal efforts, works on himself, avoiding opportunities for sin, showing humility and patience in difficulties, eradicating evil, and establishing good by concrete deeds. Let us try to bring to God, in time, the fruits of love and gratitude, let us faithfully do all that He has commanded us, and if we are good vine workers of our lives, zealous Christians, then our reward will be great in heaven!



