

# TRINITY NEWS

## **Pentecost 16 Trust and Distrust and its Outcomes**

The financial scene around the world is full of negative news about those who have been entrusted with money and property and have betrayed that trust. This may have been because of mismanagement, but often it is because of greed and its close cousin, stupidity. The slanted selectivity of the media chooses those who made a mess of it rather than those who have done it well. "After all, we have a duty to tell the public the truth about mismanagement, manipulation, and deception." But telling the truth is like exposing corruption. That is, how truthful are the truth-tellers and how incorrupt are the exposers of corruption? No one escapes this censure, not even Jesus. The difference is that he would invite it!

**The parable of the Wicked Vinedressers** is a ruthless attack on the Temple State of Judaism. We are so pious about Jesus that we find it hard to visualize him going all out to attack anyone. But he is in attack mode in this parable. Gerald O'Collins thinks that the Gospels contain autobiographical material that may divulge information about Jesus in the content of his teaching. The parables are a clear case in point. We see in this parable Jesus' struggles with the key parties in the Temple State. The Romans had shut down any military aspirations of most of the hotheads in the Jewish Temple State. They also took steps to trim its wider influence. But states in religious and secular forms aspire to power and they are prone to be seduced by it. The evidence for this abounds.

What aspirations did Jesus have about himself? Piety blocks the question, but the vulnerable humanity of Jesus requires it. The Jewish leaders and their authorized personnel were charged with administering the Torah and its precepts. The discipline about Sabbath observance and other regulations for the good of Israel was paramount. They were also charged with keeping alive the dream of the Messiah to come. Jesus accuses them in the parable of going to persistent and even extreme lengths to preserve their power. Jesus apparently thought that they exceeded their brief. He was also afraid that they would turn on him. His fear of them is just as apparent here as it is in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The owner wants a return on his investment and he sends batches of servants to get it. They are rejected in turn with increasing violence.

Then the owner sends his only son in the ill-founded hope that they will respect him. They kill him in the vineyard and throw his body outside. How much is Jesus being prophetic here, and how much does the parable project his own fears? Self-preservation always projects convictions and fears, self-doubts and hard-won assurances.

The owner reacts to the destructive and deceitful behavior of the tenants. The tenants are treated exactly as they treated the son. They are killed and thrown out. We have expensive and drawn-out trials now. The tenants are replaced with more responsible tenants, but the son cannot be replaced. His death is a loss to the father's heart, and only resurrection can bring him home. He is the cornerstone rejected by the builders when they were looking for suitable 'stones' for such a purpose. Messiah came and they rejected him as the cornerstone of the whole of their faith-inspired dreams.

Then the scene shifts to the reign of God. They have lost their tenancy and the members of the newly formed and ongoing Jesus movement will supplant them and produce fruits freely for the kingdom according to the vision of Christ.

The stone that is rejected will crush their aspirations and yet transform their intentions if they are willing. The annihilation of God contains the secrets of renewal and transformation. That is what the Cross is about. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls. They will not have the angels to hold them up before they dash their foot against the stones (Psalm 91:12). Even the devil had confidence in this assurance. When the chief priests and the Pharisees realized that he was talking about them they wanted to arrest him, but on this occasion the crowd is with him. The parable is about manipulation, deceit and violence. The only nonviolent figure is the son. But his followers will cause even greater violence in the bloody pogroms of anti-Semitism. This has stained Christian hands just as Jewish hands are stained with Palestinian blood and Palestinian hands with Jewish blood. Cycles of violence perpetuate themselves. Christ's prophetic words are so deep that they resonate in far-flung future years. What resonations do they have for us?

**Bishop Arthur Jones**

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## **TO PLAN:**

### **October 4, Tuesday.**

- Bible Study, 10am
- Group Discussion @ the Tutttons (#3 Sta. Potenciana, Urdaneta Village), 7:30pm. Cars will leave Church compound at 7:15pm.

### **October 6, Thursday.**

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel

## **CONFIRMATION:**

A confirmation class will be offered in the coming weeks. To those interested, a sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the Parish Office.





## OUTREACH.

The Outreach Committee is once again soliciting sponsors to partially shoulder the tuition of 26 students for school year 2011 to 2012 at the Holy Spirit Christian Learning Center in Taguig City. Your assistance of P4,000.00 per student will greatly help these children acquire good values and Christian education. A sign-up sheet, with names and family background of each of these students, is posted on the church bulletin board for those who wish to participate in this worthwhile endeavor.

Thank you for all your generosity.

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## HARVEST SUNDAY.

In preparation for our Harvest Sunday celebration on **October 16, 2011**, parishioners are asked to please bring donations in the form of **non-perishable food items** for distribution to our Outreach beneficiaries:

- St. Margaret Episcopal Church in Payong, Antipolo
- Holy Faith Episcopal Church in Cainta, Rizal
- Seminarians - St. Andrew's Seminary, Quezon City

The Parish Office will be accepting donations which may include - but not necessarily be limited to - the following: sardines, instant noodles, dried fish, mungo beans, rice, sugar, cooking oil, powdered milk, coffee, cereals, cookies, crackers and biscuits, candies, and dried noodle packages - bihon, vermicelli, pancit, macaroni, spaghetti, etc.

Your donations will mean a lot to the recipients and will be greatly appreciated.

Let's share our blessings!