

## St Francis Borgia SJ and St Francis of Assisi

This weekend is Saturday the 3 October, the feast of St Francis Borgia SJ and Sunday the 4 October the feast of St Francis of Assisi, beginning the Twenty Seventh Week of Ordinary Time.

The Porter's Gate sing 'Instrument of Peace'. As you enter into prayer can you make these your own words too?

In this weekend's reading from the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus continues his strong words about those who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew 21:33-43

'Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, "They will respect my son." But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance." So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They said to him, 'He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;  
this was the Lord's doing,  
and it is amazing in our eyes"?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.

In this gospel, Jesus is talking to those religious authorities who will soon bring about his execution; but the story he tells is about the way they're shunning God's will, rejecting God's project. Who do you think Jesus means when he talks about the landowner, the tenants? What does the vineyard represent?

Jesus talks about "the stone that the builders rejected," that becomes "the cornerstone" – hinting (more than hinting) that the true servant of God may turn out not to be the one we expect, but the one we reject, the person we don't even think worthy of our consideration. Who are the people I don't even think worthy of my consideration? The people I don't bother with? Can I imagine for a moment how they might be part of God's plan – a plan that I am rejecting?

As you listen to the reading again, listen out for God speaking to you. Is there something that God is asking you to do today?

Speak to God now as freely as you can. In your own words, tell the Lord what all this has stirred in your heart, how you respond, or want to respond, to his word.



Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.