

Lenten Reflections

March 13, 2020



St Francis Receiving the Stigmata – El Greco – Public Domain

<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/6457/saint-francis-receiving-the-stigmata-2/>

Jealousy, greed and vengeance are themes in today's readings. Joseph's brothers are jealous of him because his father seems to love him more. So, they plot to kill him. Later, thinking twice they sell him into slavery instead. Jesus tells a parable in which tenant farmers are jealous of their master and are also greedy for his possessions. While the landowner is away and once the vineyard begins producing, the tenants greedily seize and terrorize the servants, even killing the landowner's son. The greed and jealousy prevent the brothers and the tenants from seeing with clear vision who it is that God has sent them. Both Joseph and the landowner are rejected.

Two separate reflections encompass me. You and I also can reject those who are sent our way whether they have something much to share with us or not. The question remains the same. Do we look beyond our own feelings, desires, jealousies, or do we give in to them and prevent God's work from occurring?

Of course, the brothers and tenants represent us when we forget God and forget ourselves. We need to remember who we are and take the time to spend with our God. Yet, there are times when we still find ourselves being jealous of another's success. There are times when we act differently because no one is watching. And there are times when I/We still think, "I deserve this." "Deserve" means entitlement. On my best days when I catch myself thinking I deserve something, I pull back. I remind myself I'm not put here on Earth to get what's mine but to do what God needs of me.

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Friday of the Second Week of Lent

Lectionary: 234

Reading 1 [GN 37:3-4, 12-13A, 17B-28A](#)

Israel loved Joseph best of all his sons,
for he was the child of his old age;
and he had made him a long tunic.
When his brothers saw that their father loved him best of all his sons,
they hated him so much that they would not even greet him.

One day, when his brothers had gone
to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem,
Israel said to Joseph,
"Your brothers, you know, are tending our flocks at Shechem.
Get ready; I will send you to them."

So Joseph went after his brothers and caught up with them in Dothan.
They noticed him from a distance,
and before he came up to them, they plotted to kill him.
They said to one another: "Here comes that master dreamer!
Come on, let us kill him and throw him into one of the cisterns here;
we could say that a wild beast devoured him.
We shall then see what comes of his dreams."

When Reuben heard this,
he tried to save him from their hands, saying,
"We must not take his life.
Instead of shedding blood," he continued,
"just throw him into that cistern there in the desert;
but do not kill him outright."

His purpose was to rescue him from their hands
and return him to his father.
So when Joseph came up to them,
they stripped him of the long tunic he had on;
then they took him and threw him into the cistern,
which was empty and dry.

They then sat down to their meal.
Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead,
their camels laden with gum, balm and resin
to be taken down to Egypt.
Judah said to his brothers:
"What is to be gained by killing our brother and concealing his blood?
Rather, let us sell him to these Ishmaelites,
instead of doing away with him ourselves.
After all, he is our brother, our own flesh."

His brothers agreed.
They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

Responsorial Psalm [105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21](#)

R. (5a) Remember the marvels the Lord has done.

When the LORD called down a famine on the land
and ruined the crop that sustained them,
He sent a man before them,
Joseph, sold as a slave.

R. Remember the marvels the Lord has done.

They had weighed him down with fetters,
and he was bound with chains,
Till his prediction came to pass
and the word of the LORD proved him true.

R. Remember the marvels the Lord has done.

The king sent and released him,
the ruler of the peoples set him free.
He made him lord of his house
and ruler of all his possessions.

R. Remember the marvels the Lord has done.

Verse Before The Gospel [JN 3:16](#)

God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son;
so that everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.

Gospel [MT 21:33-43, 45-46](#)

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people:

“Hear another parable.

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard,
put a hedge around it,
dug a wine press in it, and built a tower.

Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey.

When vintage time drew near,
he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce.

But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat,
another they killed, and a third they stoned.

Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones,
but they treated them in the same way.

Finally, he sent his son to them,
thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another,
‘This is the heir.

Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.’

They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?"

They answered him,

"He will put those wretched men to a wretched death
and lease his vineyard to other tenants
who will give him the produce at the proper times."

Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures:

*The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
by the Lord has this been done,
and it is wonderful in our eyes?*

Therefore, I say to you,

the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you
and given to a people that will produce its fruit."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables,
they knew that he was speaking about them.

And although they were attempting to arrest him,
they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.