



Society of African Missions

“The Mission”

23 Bliss Avenue
Tenafly, NJ 07670
Phone: 201-567-0450
Visit our website
www.smafathers.org



Mass Schedule

Sundays

10:00 am; 12 noon

Weekdays & Holy Days

9:30 am & 11:45 am

Christmas & New Year’s Day

10:00 am; 12 noon

Confessions Saturdays:

After 11:45am Mass.

Or by appointment.

Contact Fr. Frank Wright

201-567-0450 Ext 225/231

Bereavement & Visit to the

Sick

Contact Fr. Frank Wight

201-450-6586

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday

from 9:30am to 3:00pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr Dermot Roache, SMA

Director

201-256-0450 Ext. 253

S.M.A. Museum

Open Monday-Sunday from

9:00am –5:00pm

Thank you for your support.

Please remember to support

your local parishes.

Next Monday, October 16th, 8pm

Special Book Signing:

Join **Fr. Dermot Roache, SMA**

as he gives a presentation on his recent publication:

I am the Virgin Mother of God: And your Mother too

At the Knights of Columbus St. John’s Council Hall

64 Armor Place, Dumont NJ

Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,

Provincial Superior

Fr Frank Wright,

House Superior

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Masses for the week of OCTOBER 8, 2023 – OCTOBER 14, 2023

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv. & Dec. Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Oct. 8	10:00	Nestor Ambulo (Liv.)	Rosanne Ambulo
	12:00	Clifford Tavares+	Breda Walsh
Mon. Oct. 9	9:30	Rosalba Vasquez+	Family
	11:45	Nam Yae Cho Marianna+	Anna Lee
Tue. Oct. 10	9:30	Francisco Martinez (Liv.)	Josie Martinez
	11:45	Gerarda Mauro+	Susan Iacullo
Wed. Oct. 11	9:30	Alberto Rodriguez+	Family
	11:45	Gerald Walsh+	Mae Kenny & Family
Thurs. Oct. 12	9:30	Felisa Ballen+	
	11:45	Naciansino Bontuyan+	Family
Fri. Oct. 13	9:30	Oliva Vasquez+	
	11:45	Grace & Matt Tavormina (Liv. Good Health)	Guinto Family
Sat. Oct. 14	9:30	Alberto Moreno+	
	11:45	Rosemarie Dalman (Liv.)	Rosanne Ambulo

Today’s Readings: First Reading Isaiah 5:1-7

The vineyard of the Lord is loved and tended by God.

Second Reading Philippians 4:6-9

The God of peace will be with those who are virtuous and who fill their minds with all that is good and pure.

Gospel Matthew 21:33-43

In this parable, a landowner leases his vineyard to tenants, but when he sends his servants to collect the portion of the harvest owed to him they are beaten and killed. When the landowner sends his son, he too is killed.

“Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

Illustration

Rodne Galicha is a Filipino Catholic environmental and human rights defender. He has campaigned against the destructive activities of large mining companies in key biodiversity areas in the Philippines, including critical watersheds, agricultural areas, tourism sites and island ecosystems. Fifteen years ago, when a passenger ship carrying toxic materials sank near his home island of Sibuyan, Rodne criticised contamination of the island with chemicals and fuel “affecting the life and livelihood of our people who depend mainly on the abundance of the sea”. He has spent much of his life responding to “the cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor”, as Pope Francis put it in his encyclical Laudato Si’. In 2018, Rodne successfully campaigned against the construction of a road through Mount Guiting-Guiting Natural Park, fearing the huge project would damage the mountain, listed as a protected area. Last November he attended the United Nations climate talks in Egypt, calling on world leaders to take more serious action on climate change, which is causing ever more severe weather in the Philippines.

Rodne’s engaging smile belies that the Philippines is regularly named the deadliest country for environmental defenders in Asia. Nineteen environmentalists were killed in 2021. Despite knowing some of those killed, Rodne refuses to yield to the threats and dangers. He says: “The risks involved in this advocacy are inevitable. Being an environment advocate is a lifelong commitment. We are all called to discover for ourselves the amazing link of our lives to nature.”

Gospel Teaching

Today’s Gospel parable tells of a practice that was commonplace in the first century: for a wealthy investor to buy property for a farm or vineyard and then leave it in the care of tenants. At harvest time, the owner would send someone to collect their portion of the proceeds. In the parable, the behaviour of the tenants in the vineyard is far from the expectations of the master of the vineyard. It echoes the first reading, in which the vineyard owner “expected the vineyard to yield grapes, but sour grapes were all that it gave”. The tenants refused to give the landowner what was due, and killed the servants he sent. He then sent his son. But the tenants, believing that they would inherit the vineyard if the landowner died without an heir, also killed the landowner’s son. Jesus asks those listening to this parable what they think the landowner will do to those tenants.

Application

The chief priests and elders who had questioned Jesus’ authority wanted to persecute Jesus for telling this story, because they felt that Jesus was talking about them. They understood that the vineyard represented Israel, the landowner God, and the son Jesus. Were they the wicked tenants? But today this parable is often linked to the current environmental crisis. Thus, we can see the landowner as God, those who destroy the earth as the greedy tenants, and environmental defenders as those who are killed for their mission of trying to protect God’s creation.

Pope Francis’ encyclical Laudato Si’ emphasised in 2015 that the world is not ours but God’s, who graciously entrusts the vineyard of the world to our care. But too many of us focus on our own gain and treat God’s world as a commodity to be exploited without thought to the future. We see landscapes mined to destruction, water sources poisoned and other species driven to extinction. Isaiah’s words in the first reading say: “He expected justice, but found bloodshed; integrity, but only a cry of distress.” In so many parts of the world, we see the relevance of those words. Over the centuries, how many prophets in our Christian communities have been rejected, abused and even killed? Who are the greedy tenants in today’s world, destroying God’s creation and its defenders?

The parable suggests that each of us is responsible for a portion of the “vineyard”. Have we provided shelter to those who are homeless, and fed those who are hungry? Have we provided a means of livelihood for those who have no means of living? Have we been responsible stewards of the natural world? These are questions that we should ponder. God gives us everything we need to make our vineyard flourish. We can manage the vineyard as we choose – but we do not own it. Let us be “good tenants” and do all we can to repair the damage done to the vineyard, which is our common home. What fruits will we produce for the Lord?

Living the Word