Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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"Here comes that dreamer" (Gen 37:19).

Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a; Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

In today's pairing of the story of the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers and the plot by the vineyard tenants against the owner's son we see the rich texts the Gospel writers had at hand to apply to Jesus.

Joseph is the beloved son of Jacob and Rachel, opposed out of jealousy and sold into slavery for 20 pieces of silver by his brothers. But he will later save his people as Egypt’s great steward under Pharoah by providing bread in a time of famine. In today’s Gospel, Jesus is identified with the beloved son of the vineyard owner, murdered when he is sent to ask the tenants for an account of their stewardship, based on the powerful song in Isaiah 5.

By weaving these two themes from the Hebrew Scriptures into the New Testament, the early Christian community saw the rejection and death of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. Both ancient accounts are tragic love stories. The beloved boy in the rainbow coat and the innocent heir who comes to the vineyard are sacrificed within a much larger narrative revealed by God by which we are all saved and the first fruits of God’s investment in us are harvested. For the church, Jesus is that beloved son and heir to the promise we are being offered through our sharing in his death and resurrection.

Lent is our time to see this larger narrative unfolding around Jesus and to take our place in the story. We are God’s beloved, but also stewards in the vineyard of redemption. Love dies when it is never reciprocated. No relationship takes hold and grows without conscious recognition and participation. Discipleship is the way to enter a love relationship with God that puts us on the road with Jesus to the events of Holy Week and Easter.