

Homily
Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and companions, martyrs
June 3, 2024

The tenant farmers in today's parable about the vineyard were good farmers, but bad tenants. They were good farmers in that they tended the vine, grew the fruit, harvested the produce and manufactured the wine. They were bad tenants in that they disrespected the landlord.

God created everything, including us, with the directive that we tend the earth, cultivate it and take care of it. For the most part, we are good caregivers of the earth; we have mastered farming, explored the earth, the sea and even space, we have created masterpieces of art and developed engineering works of genius, we have conquered the mysteries of the human body and found cures for many diseases, and we still have a long way to go in all these amazing accomplishments.

But have we respected our Lord and God? Do we give Him His due honor? God tasked us with mastering the world. And He charged us with His greatest command, love God, love our neighbor. No matter how many hills we climb or mysteries we uncover, are we doing the most important thing?

Today we celebrate the Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and companions. They did the most important thing; they never lost their faith, even in the face of torture and death. They stood up to the hideous atrocities of their king, Mwangi II of Buganda, refusing to participate, and they paid for it with their lives.

We may never have to literally die for our faith, but we do have to die to ourselves, to our hideous inclinations. We may live a 'good' life, using the gifts God has given us, developing the talents we all have, but are we using them for the glory of God? Are we using them to help our brothers and sisters in need? And most importantly, are we respecting the God Who created all this?

The first and most important thing we must do in this life to inherit eternal life, the promise God made for us, is to give back to God what He entrusted to us, our very selves in service to His creation, this world and all our brothers and sisters who live in it with us.

And when we struggle with all that life throws at us, we remember the best part of God's promise to us, that He loves us more than we can possibly imagine. And He will never leave us.

In you, my God, I place my trust.