

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost — Proper 22
October 4, 2026
Matthew 21:33-46

By Fr. Carlos

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”

— Matthew 21:42

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There is something beautiful that we see again and again throughout Scripture: God seems to have a special love for what the world rejects.

God chooses Mary, a humble young woman from Nazareth, to become the Mother of our Lord. Jesus is not born in a palace, but in poverty, laid in a manger. And throughout his ministry, Jesus surrounds himself with people whom respect-table socie-ty often rejected: fishermen, tax collectors, sinners, the poor, and the sick.

Last Sunday, we even heard Jesus say, “the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you” (Matthew 21:31).

And today Jesus says:

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes” (Matthew 21:42).

Jesus himself is the rejected stone. Rejected, cast outside the vineyard, and eventually crucified outside the city—and yet God makes that rejected stone the cornerstone of our salvation.

History sometimes gives us similar surprises. Thomas Edison experienced failure after failure while developing his inventions. What looked useless or un-success-ful at one moment became part of a process that eventually changed the world.

God sees possibilities where we often see failure.

And perhaps no saint understood this better than St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast we celebrate today.

Francis lived at a time when wealth, status, and power could easily become confused with Christian success. But Francis chose another road. He embraced poverty. He called himself a *Friar Minor*—a “lesser brother.” He never sought the prestige of priesthood. He wanted simply to be little, poor, and a servant of everyone.

And perhaps that is the question St. Francis leaves us today:

Who are the people we reject?

Who do we consider unimportant, inconvenient, strange, poor, sinful, or simply not like us?

Are we building walls against them—or becoming their servants?

Today we will also bless our animals, remembering Francis’ extraordinary love for God’s creation. And perhaps our animals teach us something simple: love does not always ask about status, suc-cess, wealth, or importance. It simply receives and gives love.

May God give us the grace to recognize Christ in those whom others reject, to become servants rather than judges, and to remember that the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Amen.