

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME
September 24, 2023

Gospel: (Matthew 20:1-16)

Jesus told his disciples this parable: *“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard....When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.’ When those who had started about five o’clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day’s burden and heat.’ He said to them, ‘My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ...What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?’ Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.”*

Reflection:

We all put off to the eleventh hour some piece of work that we have to do with respect to God or each other: prayer, forgiveness, charity, justice, etc.) If this parable teaches us something about how great God is and how generous, then we are called to this same greatness and generosity. Wouldn’t nations be different if debts could be forgiven and those who have were generous to those who have not? Wouldn’t families be different if hurtful behavior ceased and was forgiven generously? Wouldn’t individuals be different if we measured another only by his or her goodness? The landowner says to his grumbling laborers, “Are you envious because I am generous?” God’s generosity with us goes far beyond any measurement by human standards. (Living Liturgy, p. 240)

Vincentian Meditation:

St. Vincent knew himself to be sustained by God’s motherly and fatherly love. He could not conceive of a harsh and dreadful God. From his boyhood, he had prayed to the all-merciful, warm, and loving Father of Jesus, an **Abba** (Daddy) who called all of his children beloved. Vincent rested and warmed himself in God’s parental care and protection. Compassion, in Vincent’s view, was God’s name. Vincent once wrote: “God will take the place of father and mother for you. He will be your consolation, your virtue, and in the end the recompense of your love.(McKenna, Praying with Vincent, p.30-31.)

Discussion: *(Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)*

How have you experienced the “motherly and fatherly love” of God?

Closing Prayer:

God, our father, give us generous hearts,
-help us to find a way to peace and forgiveness.
God, our mother, give us compassionate hearts,
-help us to be merciful and loving. Amen

