



Dear Parishioners,

Christ himself is the generous landowner in this parable, and the lesson he wants us to learn is that his generosity goes beyond even our widest comprehension. This is why in the 1st reading God tells us that "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways." To pay these hired workers a full day's wage for only a few hours of work is the epitome of generosity. There is no other reason for it; he does it simply because he is generous; he is deeply concerned about these men and capable of helping them. Palestine's day laborers at that time had no steady work and no steady income. They were hired on a day-to-day basis. The workers still waiting to be given work late in the day were probably resigned to another hungry evening for themselves and their families. Only a man with a truly generous heart would take the trouble to put them to work with only an hour remaining till sundown. And only an extraordinarily generous man would pay them the full day's wage! That's Jesus.

Jesus Christ is extraordinarily generous; the history of salvation is the story of his boundless giving. First he gives life, then after Original sin he gives hope for salvation, then with the Incarnation he gives redemption, and finally, to those who faithfully work in his vineyard, he gives everlasting heavenly bliss. And it doesn't stop there. Strictly speaking, we deserve none of those gifts. And yet, just as the landowner gave the laborers real work to do in his vineyard, even if the reward far outweighed the work, Christ too allows us to make a real contribution to the eternal happiness of ourselves through prayer, self-sacrifice, and service. Jesus Christ is a volcano of generous love.

There is no better example and proof of this extraordinary generosity than the Eucharist. When the priest pronounces the words of consecration during the Mass, Christ himself becomes truly present, body, blood, soul, and divinity, under appearances of bread and wine. This is supreme generosity, for at least two reasons: First, because it enables us to make a worthy offering to God. During every Mass, we all make an offering to God. We put our money in the offering basket. We bring our prayers, needs, and thanks. .And these offerings are symbolized and united when someone from the congregation brings the bread and wine up to the priest. And yet, what value could such paltry things have in God's eyes? Doesn't he deserve much more from us? He does, but giving him what he truly deserves is beyond our abilities. God knows this, and he knows that our hearts truly desire to make him a worthy offering. And so, by transforming that earthly bread into the Eucharist, all of a sudden our finite gifts become infinite, and we are offering God, through the priest, the gift of

his own Son - the most perfect gift possible. This is the meaning of the moment in the Mass when the priest holds up the paten and the chalice at the end of the Eucharistic prayer and says, "Through him, with him, in him..." That's when all of our tiny little offerings, transformed into Christ's own self offering on the cross through the Eucharist, are given eternal value in the eyes of God. Second, God not only enables us to give him a worthy gift, but through Holy Communion he gives us a gift way beyond what we deserve. Because Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, Communion is a real share in God's own life. This is why Jesus said, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day" (John 6:54).

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta understood well the value of this gift. For her, the Eucharist was the living sign of God's tireless love and care, the undeniable proof of his limitless generosity. As she put it: "When Jesus came into the world, he loved it so much that he gave his life for it". He wanted to satisfy our hunger for God. And what did he do? He made himself the Bread of Life. "He became small, fragile and defenseless for us. Bits of bread can be so small that even a baby can chew it, even a dying person can eat it." That's truly extraordinary generosity.

May God bless you,

Fr. Dan