

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME —SEPTEMBER 20, 2020

First Reading — Isaiah 55:6-9

⁶ “Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; ⁷ let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Responsorial Psalm PS 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18

R. (18a) The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

Every day will I bless you,
and I will praise your name forever and ever.
Great is the LORD and highly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and of great kindness.

The LORD is good to all
and compassionate toward all his works.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

The LORD is just in all his ways
and holy in all his works.

The LORD is near to all who call upon him,
to all who call upon him in truth.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon him.

Second Reading — Philippians 1:20-24, 27

²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I shall not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If it is to be life in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me.

Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ...²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

Gospel Reading — Matthew 20:1-16

¹ “For the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place; ⁴ and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. ⁵ Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing; and he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And on receiving it they grumbled at the householder, ¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no

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wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?

¹⁴ Take what belongs to you, and go; I choose to give to this last as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last."

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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading —

1. Summarize the main point of verses 8 and 9.
2. In what ways are God's thoughts higher than ours?

Second Reading —

3. How do you see Christ is living in you?
4. What is meant by "striving side by side for the faith of the gospel"?

Gospel Reading —

5. How would you respond if you were in the first group hired?
6. What attitudes create this sense of injustice?
7. What insights does this parable provide regarding salvation?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.