

## 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time A 2020

Our Gospel today contrast our human sense of justice with God's divine mercy and compassion. God rewards us, not in the measure of what we do, but according to our need and His good will. The parable illustrates the difference between God's perspective and ours. It is normal for us to feel disturbed when we hear this parable because it challenges our sense of fairness and justice. We often think of equal rights for all, or an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, right? So with our sense of justice, we would favor for certain the laborers who have worked all day and would sympathize with their sentiments. But we are reminded today that our ways are not God's ways. God does not see matters in the same way that we do. God's perspective is that of the landowner, who gave some of the laborers more than they deserved, not because he favored them but because they needed help more than the others. This is demonstrated by the fact that they were still at the marketplace waiting for work even at 5 PM in the afternoon. They were in desperate need to find work and earn their living.

This shows us how God really looks at us. He sees our needs and meets those needs. The question in God's mind is not, "How much do these people deserve?" but, "How can I help them?" "How can I save them?" "How can I be of service to them?" So, to ask God to be fair to us just like the early laborers in the vineyard is not the best way to go in our relationship with God. God does not deal with us "fairly" and that is a good thing. We should be thankful in our lives that God does not give us what we deserve! Because human as we are, we fall short in our lives and not just for one time but for many times. But despite of these, God has continued to give us that "undeserved love". For this reason, we should be able to connect more to the laborers who have worked less than a full day and still received the full day's wages. If God has treated us justly, none of us would be rewarded with all the love and compassion we are receiving from him. God loves us whoever we are, whatever we have done. He gave all of us equal value. Our challenge is to recognize and to accept with gratitude God's *Amazing Grace poured forth for us*.

*Therefore, we must be more forgiving to ourselves and to others just as God has been to us. In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah reminds the exiles in Babylon that their God is more merciful than they are, and more forgiving. He is ready to pardon the infidelity which has resulted in their exile. So, we are being asked today to be the same way with each another, to be generous to one another. The question is "How?" How can we be generous in our lives? We can be generous in the way we give someone encouragement and a kind word when that person is feeling down, even though that person might not be one of our close friends. We can be generous in the way we give of our time to help someone going through a rough patch in their lives. When someone says something that offends us, we can be generous in our reaction, try to understand rather than give back the hostility or injury just as it was given to us. When we have fallen out with someone or believe we have been unfairly treated, we can be generous in our willingness to reach out, make amends and restore friendships. When someone really annoys us and gets under our skin, we can be generous with our patience and kindness, dealing with that person in a way that reflects the generous nature of God. When we see people, who lack the bare necessities needed for a happy and healthy life, we need to be generous with what we have been given by our generous God.*

In this time of the Pandemic, with the social unrest and the loud political noise trying to divide us

rather than unite us, with the wildfires and natural calamities devastating us, this call to be more generous is needed more than ever in our society and in world today. Will we able to respond to this call with great sincerity and urgency?