

Working for God

Daily Gospel and Meditation / Liturgical Cycle C

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Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 20:1-16a.

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. Going out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off. (And) he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, he found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my 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 the heat.' He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. 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."

Matthew 20: 1-16

Introductory Prayer:

Dear Jesus, I believe in you because you have revealed your plan of love to the Church. I hope in you because you are more interested in my happiness and salvation than I am. I love you because you have loved me without deserving your love.

Petition:

Lord, help me to appreciate and be grateful for your grace.

1. There Is Always an Opportunity:

One of the worst experiences is to accept that you have lost the last opportunity to do something you have always wanted to do. This can occur in any human situation: job opportunities, university acceptances, etc. In the spiritual life, on the other hand, there is always the opportunity to live only for God, the opportunity to be redeemed. There is always the possibility to start again. Why is this? It is because God has granted us our time on earth to walk towards him. Therefore, even if we fall, he continues to give us the strength to get up. That is why the sacrament of reconciliation is so important. When we lose grace, our spiritual strength, we can regain it in the sacraments, especially in confession.

2. Expecting More Than You Deserve:

Considered from a merely human point of view, this Gospel's situation is an unjust one. Whoever works more should receive more than those who work less. We tend to forget, however, that in terms of the spiritual, everything is a gift. There is nothing in our nature that can demand grace. The demands of our faith are not "favors" we do for God, but existential obligations. That is why Christ reminds us, "When you have done all you have been commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do'" (Luke 17:10).

3. The Generosity of God:

God's generosity is a manifestation of his love for us. He knows each and every person intimately and personally. He knows that the needs of some are bigger than those of others. To think that God loves some people more than others is an injustice to God. We owe love and respect to others because we are all human persons with the same dignity. We owe adoration and love to God because he is our creator and provident Father. But God owes nothing to his creatures. Everything he gives us is gratuitous and a fruit of his infinite love. It's too easy to treat God in a human way, forgetting that he is God. The most beautiful gift he gives us is his grace.

Conversation with Christ:

Dear Lord, I sometimes see things from a very human and selfish point of view. Sometimes I find myself getting angry because others may have more than I do. Help me understand that the most important thing to be truly happy in my life is to be aware of the need I have of your grace.

Resolution:

I will thank Christ for his grace and love and will try to imitate him by being generous to others.