



September 24, 2017 Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 133 Gospel MT 20:1-16A

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. Going out about nine o'clock, the landowner 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, the landowner 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."

Spiritual Reflection: This parable is one of the toughest parables in the Gospels because it really challenges our way of thinking. It is so difficult for us to take in because we naturally see others as competition instead of as brothers and sisters in Christ. Other people's successes do not make me less lovable. Let us therefore stop comparing ourselves with others and celebrate God's generosity.

Spiritual Questions

1. How would you feel if you were one of the first ones hired?
2. How would you feel if you were one of the last ones hired?
3. Why is there a difference?
4. Do other people's successes make you less comfortable? Why?
5. How can you learn to celebrate other people's successes?