

25th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Isaiah 55:6-9
Ps 145:2-3,8-9,17-18
Philippians 1:20c-24,27a
Matthew 20:1-16a

Monday September 21 St. Matthew

Ephesians 4:1-7,11-13
Ps 19:2-5
Matthew 9:9-13

Tuesday September 22

Proverbs 21:1-6,10-13
Ps 119:1,27,30,34,35,44
Luke 8:19-21

Wednesday September 23

St. Pio of Pietrelcina

Proverbs 30:5-9
Ps 119:29,72,89,
101,104,163
Luke 9:1-6

Thursday September 24

Ecclesiastes 1:2-11
Ps 90:3-6,12-14,17bc
Luke 9:7-9

Friday September 25

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
Ps 144:1b-4
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday September 26

Ecclesiastes 11:9--12:8
Ps 90:3-6,12-14,17
Luke 9:43b-45

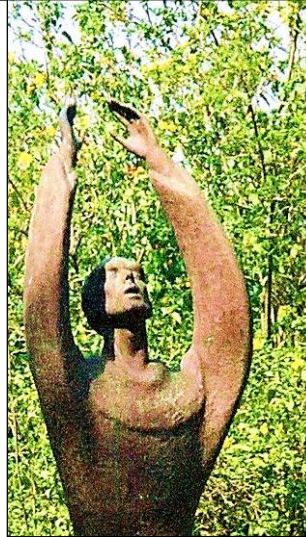
God's not fair! How many times have we felt that way? And it's true, at least by our standards. The parable in the Gospel reading is a fine example of this.

The landowner seems to be very unfair. We can begin to understand him, however, if we think of this parable in terms of parenthood. A loving father cares about each of his children equally. Although he gives more attention to the child who needs it more, he loves the others just as much.

God the Father is like a vineyard owner who gives equally to all. Since we cannot earn our way into heaven, equal benefits are not an injustice to those who labored longer. Rather, God gives complete and perfect love even to those who only discovered, at the last minute, the value of having a relationship with him. He can

do no less.

The first reading reminds us that as high as the heavens are above the earth, God's ways are greater than our ways and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts. We think that justice (fairness) means equal treatment, but that harkens back to the Old Testament concept of justice: "an eye for an eye". Jesus raised justice to its highest level, which means being equally loving and kind to all, whether they deserve it or not.



We don't have to *understand* God's higher ways. We only have to be *grateful* that God loves us even when we are unloving. No matter how undeserving of his love we might be, he still gives us the same amount of love that he gives to the holiest of saints. He loves us as much as he loves Mary the Blessed Mother of Christ! "Am I not free to

do as I wish with my own love?" he asks.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. When have you felt undeserving of God's goodness?
2. What evidence proves that he never stopped loving you? What did he do for you?
3. How has your own opinion of yourself interfered with feeling his love?
4. Share the story of a time when you saw something good happen to a "bad" or undeserving person, or a time when you prayed for something that you didn't get while an unfaithful person received it without turning to God for help. Despite the unfairness of this, why are you glad that you have known God's love?
5. Can you also be glad for the blessings that unbelievers receive from God?