

# Scripture Study

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle A



## **Opening prayer**

Isaiah 55:6-9

(Ps 145:2-3,8-9,17-18)

Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a

**Matthew 20:1-16a**

## **Overview of the Gospel:**

- Since the Gospel readings a couple of weeks ago, we have skipped over Matthew chapter 19, in which Jesus discusses the indissolubility of marriage, the little children and Jesus, and the story of the Rich Young Man.
- This Sunday's reading contains the first of three parables in Matthew that concern a vineyard (Matthew 21:28-32 and 21:33-44). The vineyard was a common Old Testament image for the people of God (Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 5:10; Ezekiel 19:10-14), usually in the context of their unfaithfulness to him.
- In this context, this parable is aimed at the unbelieving Jews of the time who resented the fact that Gentiles (non-Jews) could be allowed into God's kingdom on equal status with the Jews (Matthew 21:45). By extension it also applies to Christians and their attitudes toward late converts to the Faith.
- Jesus' point is that both calls are not owed, but are an entirely free gift from God to give to whom he chooses. The reward, which is the same for all, is his gift alone to give.

## **Questions:**

- How does the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading underscore the fact that God works in his own ways beyond our ability to completely see or understand?
- In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, does St. Paul presume to have God's plans for his life figured out? What is his overall attitude toward God's will and providence in his life?
- Why are identical wages given to both early and late workers? Who is discontented and why (verses 10-12)? Is the landowner's practice unjust, generous, or both? Why?
- Who gets any less from God: the "five o'clock" converts (Gentiles)? Or those who should have known God since "the first hour" (the Jews)?
- If you were one of the first workers hired, how would you have reacted to the landowner?
- How do you feel about recent converts getting the same benefits as you in the kingdom?
- Would you say you entered God's kingdom early, in the middle, or late in the day? Do you ever wish you had entered later in your life, or felt jealous of others who waited until the "eleventh hour"?

**Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 679, 1021—1022, 1040**

## **Closing prayer**

*Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to ask for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward save knowing that we do your will. - St. Ignatius of Loyola*

**Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings!**

