



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

This is a story of the day labourers of Jesus' time. The 'early birds' contracted for the just wage of one denarius and did the hard work over the course of a long day. They were outraged when latecomers also received a denarius.

This little parable circulated in the Christian community of the first century because there was great antagonism between the Jews who became followers of Jesus and the non-Jews, the 'Gentiles'. Jewish Christians looked at their long history of hardship preparing for the coming of the Messiah. And, now, here were these Gentiles who had done nothing by comparison, and God appeared to be granting them whatever it took to enjoy the 'daily bread' of the Kingdom of God.

Jewish Christians had to be shocked out of *their* idea that God's grace could *not* be lavished on those outside the boundaries of the Chosen People.

We could pause to pray to be taken by happy surprise by those billions of people outside the Church who, by the grace of God, will share with us 'the Bread of Life', given for the salvation of *all* the world.

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men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last" they said "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

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The Living Word

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

24 September 2023

First Reading **Is 55:6-9**

My thoughts are not your thoughts.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will take
pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;
for my thoughts are not your thoughts,
my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who
speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 144:2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R. v.18

(R.) The Lord is near to all who call him.

1. I will bless you day after day
and praise your name for ever.
the Lord is great, highly to be praised,
his greatness cannot be measured. *(R.)*
2. The Lord is kind and full of
compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures. *(R.)*
3. The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts. *(R.)*

Second Reading **Phil 1:20-24. 27**

For me to live is Christ.

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results – I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake.

Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

Gospel Acclamation **See Acts 16:14**

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Open our hearts, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia!*

Gospel **Mt 20:1-16**

Why are you jealous because I am generous?

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more

**OUR LADY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH
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Parish Office Hours: Mon, Tues & Wed 10am-4.00pm; Fri 10am-3.00pm.

Sunday Masses: English - Saturday 5.30pm, Sunday 9am, 10.30am, 5.30pm
 Mass in other languages: Chin - Burmese Sunday 2.30pm; Tongan 1st & 22nd October, 2023
 Vietnamese Saturday Vigil 7pm, Sunday 12.30pm, Friday 7pm
Mass Times: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday 9am; Friday 11am; Tuesday 7.30pm
Confessions: Saturdays 9.30am (English or Vietnamese) Novena: Tuesday 8.00pm



First and Last: Scott Hahn Reflects on the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings: Is 55:6-9; Ps 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18; Phil 1:20-24, 27; Matt 20:1-16

The house of Israel is the vine of God, who planted and watered it, preparing the Israelites to bear fruits of righteousness.

Israel failed to yield good fruits, and the Lord allowed His vineyard, Israel's kingdom, to be overrun by conquerors. **But God promised that one day He would replant His vineyard and its shoots would blossom to the ends of the earth.**

This is the biblical backdrop to Jesus' parable of salvation history in today's Gospel. **The landowner is God. The vineyard is the kingdom. The workers hired at dawn are the Israelites, to whom He first offered His covenant. Those hired later in the day are the Gentiles, the non-Israelites, who, until the coming of Christ, were strangers to the covenants of promise. In the Lord's great generosity, the same wages, the same blessings promised to the first-called, the Israelites, will be paid to those called last, the rest of the nations.**

This provokes grumbling in today's parable. Doesn't the complaint of those first laborers sound like that of the older brother in Jesus' prodigal son parable? God's ways, however, are far from our ways, as we hear in today's First Reading. And today's readings should caution us against the temptation to resent God's lavish mercy.

Like the Gentiles, many will be allowed to enter the kingdom late—after having spent most of their days idling in sin. But even these can call upon Him and find Him near, as we sing in today's Psalm. We should rejoice that God has compassion on all whom He has created. This should console us, too, especially if we have loved ones who remain far from the vineyard. Our task is to continue labouring in His vineyard. As Paul says in today's Second Reading, let us conduct ourselves worthily, struggling to bring all men and women to the praise of His name.



MASS INTENTIONS 24-30 September

Sat 5.30pm Biagia Pagliaro RIP
 Giuseppe Mure RIP
 Sun 9.00am Angela & John Spiteri RIP
 10.30am Pro Populo
 5.30pm Robert Vincent Pillai RIP
 Mon 9.00am Parish Intention
 Tues 7.30pm Parish Intention
 Wed 9.00am Chris Basadur RIP
 Thur 9.00am Thanksgiving
 Fri 11.00am Des & Mary Lee RIP
 Sat 9.00am Parish Intention

“Will you not watch one hour with me?” Matt 26:40

You are invited to come and spend some quiet time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament: Each Friday 12pm -3.00pm Come for just a short visit or stay as long you wish.



COLUMBAN MISSIONS -Far East Magazine

A Columban Father will talk today at all Masses about their missionary works.

MARCH FOR THE BABIES

Come and show your support for the unborn. Join the March for the Babies on 7th October 2023 at 12.30pm in the Treasury Gardens, Cnr Spring St & Wellington Pde.

DONATIONS to support our parish **SCAN this QR Thank you!**



OCTOBER is the MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY.

Feast Days in October include: 1. St Therese of Lisieux 2. Feast of the Guardian Angels 7. Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary 15. St Teresa of Avila 16. St Margaret Mary 18. St Luke 15. St Simon & Jude Apostles 23. St Paul Tong Viet Buong (Martyr 1833. Relic in our Altar)

May the Saints intercede for our needs.

ANNUAL MISSION FETE - Saturday 14 October 9.00am-2.30pm Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver, 154 Cotham Road, Kew

Child Safety Reminders & Important notice for Parents

- Please accompany your child if they need to leave the building.
- Please ensure you know where your child is if not beside you.

Our Parish is committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children and vulnerable

Week 1: Sept 30/Oct 1	5.30 pm	9.00 am	10.30 am	5.30 pm
Lectors	Andrea Borges	Lucy Sgro	Jannelli Campana	Nenita Santos
Extraordinary Ministers	Mary Rapa	Vickie Blampied	Anita Mastroianni	Celine Rivera
Data Projector	Connie Sposato	Antoinette Spiteri	Emmanuel Campana	Eldred Rivera