

We are entering into the last segment of Ordinary Time

A liturgical time that calls us to see what kind of disciple I have become?

What type of disciple am I becoming?

Because we are all called into discipleship

And this is a calling we will never fully complete in this life

But we work at it

Little by little

Striving to be faithful

And returning time and again when we fail

Seeking His mercy in our lives

As we get closer to the end of our liturgical year

We will begin to look more closely at the last things

Because we have to consider our destination

So we can adjust our course today

Our readings today challenge our idea of what is fair

Probably one of the most common complaints of children

It's not fair

The problem is that often times we continue this complaint as adults

We have to shift our perspective

From seeing as humans see

To seeing as God sees

Because humanly speaking

Many things are not fair

Why did this person have a tragic accident?

Why is there cancer?

Why did these hurricanes hit where they did?

Why so many strong hurricanes this year?

The earthquake in Mexico

Was this a punishment on them?

We have to look at these as something good

Because God allows all things for the good of those who love him

Isaiah speaks of this in our 1st reading

When we turn to God seeking His mercy

God is generous in forgiving

And how different God's ways are from ours

As high as the heavens above the earth

So high are my ways above your ways

My thoughts above your thoughts

As we heard last week

Forgiveness is a matter of the will

A decision to forgive

That is God's outlook

We need the humility to recognize how and when we sin

And to turn to Him

Seeking His mercy

So we may receive His forgiveness

So we may be an instrument of forgiveness to others

We see an example of God's generosity in our Gospel

Seeing God in the landowner

He owns the vineyard

It is a family business

He doesn't need others

As he would have his family

God doesn't need us

The Holy Trinity lacks nothing

He is complete in and of Himself

He desires us

**The situation described in the Gospel is familiar in many places
in the world still today**

Early in the morning men gather looking for work

Persons needing workers show up and hire

It is a daily exchange

They work for a daily wage rather than hourly

And it is a day by day arrangement, not a permanent job

So the landowner in our parable goes to the marketplace

He agrees with those there for the usual daily wage

And sends them to his vineyard

He returns around 9:00 and finds some still there

You, too, go to my vineyard and I will give you what is just

Again at noon and 3:00 he does the same thing

Then around 5:00 he goes to the marketplace once again

Why are you standing here idle all day?

No one has hired us

Where they were when the day started?

Where were they at mid-day

Even at mid-afternoon

He had been hiring all day

All they had to do was show up

But rather than chastising them

He instructs them to go to his vineyard and see the foreman

Now comes the time to settle up for the day

The landowner tells his foreman

Call those hired last

Give them a full day's wage

These men had families to feed and take care of

The landowner did not punish them

He treated them with mercy

When the ones that started early in the day saw this

They thought surely they would be given a bonus

But when it came their turn to be paid

They received the same wage

So they grumble

Would we be any different, even today?

It's not fair, right?

The landowner could have started with those hired early in the morning

They would have received their pay and left

No one would have known

But Jesus wants to show us something about God

My ways are not your ways

No one has been cheated, no injustice has occurred

They had agreed to work for the usual wage

The others were hired

The landowner told them I will give you what is just

Look at this from the landowner's point of view

He was simply being generous

He was generous to those hired early in the morning

He did not need them

He was generous in returning again and again throughout the day

Sending more and more men to the field

And his generosity showed in another way

Giving the usual daily wage to those that had only worked a short time

In all of this he was generous

None of these men could lay a claim on being hired

They did not have a right to a job

The landowner asks a question

Am I not free to do as I wish with my own money?

God generously gives of himself

His mercy, his grace

His love

His gifts

His talents

Even His life so we might have life

These and more

He simply gives

The limitation is on our part, not God's

At the heart of this parable is ingratitude

The ingratitude for the good things we have

And the ingratitude for the good things others have

**We see the ingratitude of the workers for what they received in
justice**

And their ingratitude for the generosity of the landowner

Their world revolves around them

And when things don't turn out as they think they should

Then it is not fair

St Ignatius of Loyola tells us ingratitude is the cause

The beginning and the origin of all sin

Even the original sin of Adam and Eve was because of ingratitude

God had given them everything

He gave them life

He placed them in the garden of Eden

They did not have to work

And yet they were ungrateful

They desired more

They desired things to be as they thought fit

They desired to be gods

And not be a beloved son or daughter of a loving God

Ingratitude cut them off from God

And it can do the same for us

Look at what God has given each of us

Beginning with our life

Our talents and gifts

Do we recognize the source?

Are we grateful?

For God has the same end in mind for each of us

To be with Him for all eternity

And he offers the same wage for each of us, His mercy

The sacraments are there for all

The most hardened sinner

The holiest religious

Both come to confession

Both hear the same words

Your sins are forgiven

They both can receive the same Christ in the Eucharist

Why?

Part of His Mystery

My ways are not your ways

Seeing this, it is not about what we 'earn'

It is about who we receive

Coming face to face with His generosity, love and mercy

He asks only one thing from us

To give Him thanks