

Our Faith on Sunday

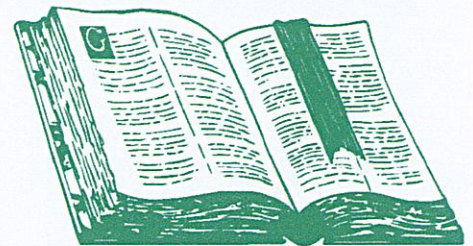
GOSPEL REFLECTION



pay. In fact, just like many of the parables narrated by Jesus, the point is to shock us into realising the radical difference between the kingdom of God and the earthly kingdom that we human beings build for ourselves. In this earthly kingdom there are laws and regulations but these are built on a prior foundation of the realities of rivalry and competition between people that is rooted in our nature. In this kingdom the "first" are entitled to enjoy being first, and the "last" must content themselves with being last.

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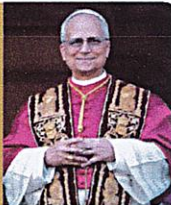
whole point of the parable is to illustrate that in the kingdom of God rivalry and competition no longer exist because love is the principle which guides everything. The Church is meant to be an anticipation of this kingdom and that is why any trace of envy, jealousy, bickering and backbiting among Christians is an unacceptable scandal. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "While there is jealousy and rivalry among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving in an ordinary human way?" (1 Cor 3,3). The same Paul warns the Galatians about: "hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions" breaking out in the community if they are no longer guided by the Spirit (Gal 5,20).



In the parable that is presented to us in this Sunday's gospel reading we can understand the reaction of those who worked all day toiling under the sun when those who worked for just one hour got the same

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POPE LEO XIV THE HOLY SEE APOSTOLIC EXHORTATIONS



THE CRY OF THE POOR

12. We must not let our guard down when it comes to poverty. We should be particularly concerned about the serious conditions in which many people find themselves due to lack of food and water. In wealthy countries too, the growing numbers of the poor are equally a source of concern. In Europe, more and more families find themselves unable to make it to the end of the month. In general, we are witnessing an increase in different kinds of poverty, which is no longer a single, uniform reality but now involves multiple forms of economic and social impoverishment, reflecting the spread of inequality even in largely affluent contexts. Let us not forget that "doubly poor are those women who endure situations of exclusion, mistreatment and violence, since they are frequently less able to defend their rights. Even so, we constantly witness among them impressive examples of daily heroism in defending and protecting their vulnerable families."⁸ While significant changes are under way in some countries, "the organization of societies worldwide is still far from reflecting clearly that women possess the same dignity and identical rights as men. We say one thing with our words, but our decisions and reality tell another story,"⁹ especially if we consider the numbers of women who are in fact destitute.

8. Ibid., 212: AAS 105 (2013), 1108.

9. Francis, Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti (3 October 2020), 23: AAS 112 (2020), 977.

St. Francis of Sales Introduction to the Devout Life

Nothing is so opposed to charity, much more to a devout spirit, as contempt and depreciation of one's neighbour, and where satire and ridicule exist contempt must be. Therefore contempt is a grievous sin, and our spiritual doctors have well said that ridicule is the greatest sin we can commit in word against our neighbour, inasmuch as when we offend him in any other way, there may still be some respect for him in our heart, but we are sure to despise those whom we ridicule... I entreat you never speak evil of any, either directly or indirectly; beware of ever unjustly imputing sins or faults to your neighbour, of needlessly disclosing his real faults, of exaggerating such as are overt, of attributing wrong motives to good actions, of denying the good that you know to exist in another, of maliciously concealing it, or depreciating it in conversation. In all and each of these ways you grievously offend God, although the worst is false accusation, or denying the truth to your neighbour's damage, since therein you combine his harm with falsehood.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord.
Should they cry to me in any distress,
I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

COLLECT

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbour,
grant that, by keeping your precepts,
we may merit to attain eternal life.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 145(144):2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R.18a

R. The LORD is close to all who call him.

I will bless you day after day,
and praise your name for ever and ever.
The LORD is great and highly to be praised;
his greatness cannot be measured.

The LORD is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
How good is the LORD to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

The LORD is just in all his ways,
and holy in all his deeds.
The LORD is close to all who call him,
who call on him in truth.

SECOND READING

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.
Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a

Brothers and sisters: Christ will be honoured in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL

Alleluia, alleluia. Cf. Acts 16:14b
Open our hearts, O Lord,
that we may pay attention to the words of your Son.
Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 20:1-16

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus told his disciples this parable, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market-place, and to them he said, "You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you." So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, "Why do you stand here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You go into the vineyard too."

'And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, "Call the labourers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first." And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?" So the last will be first, and the first last.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

R. PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive with favour, O Lord, we pray,
the offerings of your people,
that what they profess with devotion and faith
may be theirs through these heavenly mysteries.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Ps 118: 4-5

**You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept;
may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Graciously raise up, O Lord,
those you renew with this Sacrament,
that we may come to possess your redemption
both in mystery and in the manner of our life.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.