

Wednesday's Gospel: Called to Work in the Vineyard

Gospel for Wednesday in the
20th Week of Ordinary Time,
and commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 20:1-16*)

“The kingdom of heaven is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers 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 steward, ‘Call the laborers 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 the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the householder, 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 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.”

Commentary

“The kingdom of heaven is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.”

Work is part of the divine plan. God has created us to work, and He wants human work to be the path to help complete the work of Creation and the work of Redemption.

“Why do you stand here idle all day.” By being called into God’s vineyard to work, we participate in God’s creative work. For by working we imitate our Creator, and hence we need to strive to do our work with perfection and out of love.

Moreover, as Saint Josemaría taught: “since Christ took it into his hands, work has become for us a redeemed and redemptive reality.” Redeemed because the work of each one, carried out with care and out of love for God, contributes to completing the work of Creation. Redemptive because our Lord has also redeemed us through his many years of work in Nazareth.

Work is a path to holiness. The work that we carry out in accord with God’s will for us brings us closer to Him and becomes a path to heaven. The denarius that the parable speaks about is the eternal life that awaits us

as God's gift, and that we attain in part through our sanctified and sanctifying work.

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