



25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 20:1-16

"For 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."

Some things to think about...

- God is generous and loves everyone the same which we can sometimes find difficult to understand, like some of the workers in the parable.
- If someone new joins Mini Vinnies halfway through the year, they should get the same thanks at the end of the year as everyone else.
- Do you keep a score of all the good works you do for others? Why should we avoid doing this?

Activity

Using small heart cut out shapes, write something that you could do to show love or acceptance to another person. You could do more than one! Stick all of your hearts onto a large heart. All of these little hearts together show how big and generous God's love is!

OR

Think about what the word generous means to you. Come up with ways that your Mini Vinnie group is generous in the way you serve your community eg generous with your time and kindness to others.

Notes:



Teacher's notes

(You may wish to provide a summary of this Gospel reading to simplify it.) As in other parts of the Gospel, the hyperbolic language (e.g. "the last will be first, and the first last") is meant to catch the audience's attention but we can recontextualise the lesson for our own lives.

This parable could be seen as similar to the Parable of the Prodigal Son as both include people who receive the fair treatment that they deserve other characters who receive a lot even though don't deserve it, which results in jealousy from others. The religious leaders of the time did not like Jesus' acceptance of tax collectors and other outcasts, but Jesus was showing that this was not God's way. Matthew may be trying to show that we should rejoice that God accepts those who are rejected by society, rather than being angry or jealous about it.

Jesus is explaining that the reward for following God will be the same for everyone, no matter how long they have done so. He also reminds us that we should not judge other people on how worthy they are of God's love or focus on other people's work and success, but we should focus on sharing God's love with others, in the best way we can.

Notes: