

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

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

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS

Ps 145(144):2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R18a

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 close to all who call him.

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 close to all who call him.

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.

The LORD is close to all who call him.

A READING FROM THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

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

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION .

John 13:34

Alleluia, alleluia.

A new commandment I give to you, says the Lord,
that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

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 steward, “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.’

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REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

In two years time England are playing Spain in the Euros final (again) and Spain are winning 2-1 (again). Tuchel finally responds to the crowd chants and sends on Marcus Rashford with 6 minutes to go. Bukayo Saka crosses, Rashford meets it at the far post and scores. After the England free kick as Spain were timewasting over the

restart, Kane has it, sees Rash flying in from the left and sends a perfect pass, Rashford picks it up and sends a rocket shot past Unai Simon and its 3-2. Rashford has only been on for 6 minutes compared to some of the others but deserves his medal and a share in the bonus.

Today's gospel has a similar theme of who deserves what they get. The vineyard owner has picked the strongest men first, then the older, then realises it's the women who do most work and has picked the younger looking ones (all the women in St Winefride's church). Then the children whose small nimble fingers can pick out the best grapes remaining. Finally, he offers the chance to the very elderly, lame, and outsiders, immigrant who came by the Way of the Sea. and the blind. He realises they all have need for an income.

This is an insight into God's ways not man's. It seems unfair at first glance but God sees needs and responds accordingly. The Social Justice teaching of the Church highlights this:

The preferential option for the poor

Offering education to those who had no chance

Development agencies throughout the world.

It was Leo 13th who hearing of the workers in industrial cities wrote of the need for a living wage and somewhere to live, allying the Church with workers unions, Cardinal Manning in England supported the dockers in their Strike in 1889. St Thomas More's book Utopia wrote that work should be fulfilling and rewarding, a them Pope John Paul II continued.

In our lives the way we treat each other reflects this, when we give the gift our time to those we like and those who might want it in a fair way. We try to help disregarding the social divides of class, gender, race or wealth.