

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
20 September 2020
Matthew 20:1-6

Catechist Background

The parable we hear today has a fairly straightforward message: God, the owner of the vineyard, treats all his workers a just daily wage, regardless of when they arrived in the vineyard. The 'envy' held by those who worked the whole day is directed at the vineyard owner rather than other workers; this point is implicit in the original Greek but is less clear when translated into English. The message of the last being first and the first being last has been applied to different groups of people throughout the ages. Jesus' original disciples were made up of some of the 'last' in society: tax collectors, sinners and brigands. As Matthew's original audience was probably made up of Jewish Christians, Matthew may have included this story to drive home the point that although they came from pagan roots, Gentile Christians were entitled to full participation in the Christian community just as they were. In our own day, we should consider who the 'last' in society are, and remember that they are equal inheritors of the Kingdom of God.

Setting the Scene

For the activity described below, you will need a 'vine,' either drawn on a large (A1) piece of paper, or cut out of pieces of paper and stuck to the wall; the vine could have grapes on it and some leaves too. You will also need a 'leaf' for each child, writing/drawing materials, and tape or blu-tak to attach the children's leaves to the vine.

We Say Sorry

Leader: Lord Jesus, you act with fairness and justice, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: You reach out the strong and the weak, Christ have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: You will lead us to God's Kingdom, Lord have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

We Pray (1)

God in heaven, help us to follow your law of love through showing your love to other people. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- Have you ever thought, 'That's not fair!' about something? How does it make you feel when you think things are not fair?
- Why were the people who were hired first cross when they were paid?

- Did the people hired last need the same amount of money to live as the people hired first? How do you think the people hired last in the story felt when they were paid?
- What do you think will happen to people who come to know about God and to follow God later in their lives? Should they be able to belong to God's family as much as those of us who have known about God since we were small? Of course!

Response

Give one 'leaf' to each child and ask him/her to draw or write something they are thankful to God for. Invite the children to come forward, one at a time, and attach their 'leaves' to the 'vine.'

We Believe

Relating to the Creed what you have shared with the children, ask this series of questions and invite the children to reply, 'I do.'

- Do you believe in God, who is a generous and loving God?
- Do you believe in Jesus who teaches us to treat others the way they should be treated?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who gives us the strength to be kind and generous to others?

We Pray (2)

Again, try to relate the bidding prayers to the reading by saying, 'God, the vineyard owner, is always watching over us and so we now pray...'

Leader: We pray for the Church, that we may continue the work of Jesus. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the world, that countries may work together to make sure all people have what they need to live full lives. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for a spirit of love in the hearts of all people gathered here today. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for those in our world who are 'last' and left out in any way. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, help us not only to keep from being envious, but also to share your generosity with others. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

