

Sunday between 18 and 24 September

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

First Reading - Isaiah 55.6-9

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Turn away

from your wicked ways,
and turn to the Lord,
for the Lord is ready to welcome you.

Turn away

from your plotting
for injustice,
and call upon the Lord,
for the Lord is near.

Return to the Lord your God,
for God will have mercy,
and freely forgive.

For the ways

and the purposes
of the Lord
are higher than ours -
as high as the heavens
are above the earth.

This is the word of the Lord.

Second Reading - Philippians 1.20b-27

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Even in my imprisonment, I trust

that Christ
will be glorified
in whatever happens to me,
whether I live,
or whether I die.

And I do not know
which I prefer.

For to me, to live is Christ,
and to die is gain.

To remain in this body
means fruitful ministry;
to depart would mean
to be with Christ.

But I have become convinced
that I shall remain,
for your sake;

so that I can return to you,
and share with you, once again,
in your growth in faith,
and in the great confidence
and joy

that you have
in Christ Jesus.

So continue to live
in accordance
with the gospel of Christ,
so that, whether I come to see you myself,
or whether I hear about you from afar,

I will know that you are standing firm,
and that you are working as one,
in the spirit,
for the faith,
and for the gospel.

This is the word of the Lord.

Gospel - Matthew 20.1-16

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

Jesus said, 'A landowner went out,
early in the morning,
to hire workers.

They agreed the usual daily wage,
and began the day's work
in the vineyard.

The landowner went out again,
around nine o'clock;
and seeing others,
standing idle, in the market-place,
invited them, also, to work in the vineyard,
offering to pay them
"whatever is right."

The landowner went out again, at midday,
and again, at about three o'clock,
and did the same.

And around five o'clock, the landowner went out
and found others, and asked them
why they were standing around
idle all day;

and when they said
that nobody had hired them,
the landowner told them to join the others,
working in the vineyard.

When evening came,
the landowner told his manager
to call in the workers,
and give them their pay,
beginning with the last.

So those who were hired
at five o'clock
came in first.

And each of them received
the usual daily wage.

When the others came in,
they thought
they would receive more.

But they also received
the usual daily wage.

And they complained against the landowner,
saying, "These worked only the final hour,
but you have made them equal to us,
when we worked the full day,
through the scorching heat."

But the landowner said, "I am doing you no wrong.
You agreed the usual daily wage.
So take what is yours, and go.

I can do as I please
with what belongs to me.

And I choose
to give the last
the same as you.

Or do you somehow see wickedness
in my generosity?"

And so it will be
in the kingdom of heaven:
that the last will be first,
and the first will be last.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.