

SEPTEMBER 18, 2011
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME MATTHEW 20:1-16A

THE PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

This parable of the laborers in the Vineyard appears only in Matthew and it seems that it belongs to the "Jewish" Christians. The vineyard, the *denarius*, the hours of the day when men are hired, and the reverse order of payment have all been exploited for allegorical meaning. The parable illustrates the dreadful condition of casual labor in the Hellenistic-Roman world. The laborers are rebuked not for dissatisfaction with what they receive, but the dissatisfaction that others receive as much, and the employer insists on his right to be generous. By giving to one he takes nothing away from another. The generosity of the employer is to be commended.

God in His generosity to us gives us His love, His gifts; how we accept and use and share these gifts is our responsibility. Do I rejoice at the good fortune of others, their successes and opportunities? How do I act when I feel I am unjustly treated?

The most obvious meaning of the parable is that it compares Jews and Gentiles in the reign of God. The Gentiles are admitted late, but they are admitted on all equal standing with the Jews.

The parable also indicates that an early call has no relevance to standing in the reign of God. Whenever one is admitted, one is admitted to full participation. The reign of God does not become the property of those who first sought admission, even if they are its officers.

Moye's ideal for us CDPs was that we become one in mind and heart, living in a common life in the spirit of Jesus—thus bringing about the reign of God in our own day.

--Sr. Marietta Fischer, CDP

[Sr. Marietta Fischer died in 2009 at McCullough Hall, the Sisters' nursing center].

For reflection or sharing:

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- ▲ How open am I to acknowledging and accepting God's generosity to me? to others?
 - ▲ Human worth is based on personhood. What specific actions can you take to confirm the worth of people you meet daily?

Sept. 20, 1851 ••• Mother St. Andrew received the habit of the Sisters of Divine Providence at the motherhouse at St. Jean-de-Basel, Lorraine, France.