

Homily 25th Sunday Year A 2020

In today's climate of equal wages for equal jobs for both men and women, the media would have had a field day with Jesus' parable of the vineyard workers. Justice dictates that those who work longer hours be paid more otherwise they are being exploited and mistreated. Maybe that is why Jesus appeared 2000 years ago when people had time to reflect on a story before jumping to conclusions. In fact, Jesus covered his bases because he made a contract that he would pay his workers a fair and just wage which he did for those hired first. All the other workers benefitted from the generosity of the vineyard owner. It could be argued that the vineyard owner did not want to penalise those who worked less time, even those who only worked an hour, because they would have needed the money to feed and clothe their families. As always, Jesus challenges us to look at life differently. After all, Jesus was always turning things upside down both culturally and spiritually. In his day, money and wealth were seen as God's reward for keeping the rules, as blessings. Jesus said that this was not correct. Status, wealth, an eye for an eye, were replaced by humility, forgiving one's enemies and care for the poor. For all the negative effect of the pandemic, which is still very much with us, it has provided us with an opportunity to re-evaluate our lives and the way we live. We have rediscovered the importance and value of family and the support we give to and receive from each other. Change in income forces people to live more simply and be much less wasteful. Hopefully we will have had more time to visit the countryside and be touched by its inherent beauty and want to do more to preserve and foster its growth. We have an opportunity not just for renewal but for living in a new way. Now that old habits, like shaking hands and hugging, have been prohibited, we can develop new ways of showing how precious family and friends are to us.

Christine Sine writes: *The Celts approached God with awe, reverence and wonder but also saw God as an essentially human figure intimately involved in all creation and engaged in a dynamic relationship with it. This interweaving of intimacy and mystery embraced the Trinity as a family and each family unit be it family, clan or tribe was seen as an icon of the Trinity. The Trinity was a very real presence for Celtic Christians and an almost tangible comforter and protector who could ward off evil forces. The presence of Christ was almost physically woven through the lives of the Celts. He encircled, upheld and encompassed them, was a companion next to them, a guest in the house, a physical presence in their lives. What is true for the Celts is also true for us.*

*This week, look for God in the translucence of creation and in the faces of strangers. Think of yourself as a guest of the world and prepare yourself for the amazing gifts God wants to lavish on you today – gifts of friendship, food, fellowship, love and caring. **It will change your life!!***

1. What do you call a parade of rabbits hopping backwards? **A receding hare-line.**
2. **How to treat good wine:** Open the bottle and allow it to breathe. If it doesn't seem to be breathing, give it mouth to mouth.