

Homily 15th Sunday Year A 2023

Like most people, we would support the workers in the vineyard who worked all day while those who worked just one-hour receiving the same pay and draw the same conclusion that the vineyard owner isn't fair. Leading us to think that God isn't fair. In fact, God isn't fair! How else are we still alive after all the faults and failings with which our lives are littered, God not only forgives us but seems to love us all the more. So, Isaiah is right, God's ways are not our ways.

Stories along with all form of art are produced to stimulate thought and reflection. The artist may well have an intention or a motivation for producing his or her work of art, be it written, painted, in musical form, or dance but also hopes that the people who experience it may find stimulation and reflection that are completely different. Rather than just one explanation of a work of art there are multiple ways of appreciating it. Of course, the story of the vineyard can be broken down into segments and some explanation given about each section, but this is like discussion why a painter used this colour rather than another one; in so doing, missing the bigger picture.

For many, the vineyard owner is seen to represent God and the story exhibits the abundant goodness and generosity of God. But the vineyard owner could also represent the many generous peoples of the world who put themselves out to help others, and there are very many of them. In Jesus we experience a fully human person but also one who is God, otherwise known as the incarnation. But so too the good people of the world who are the vast majority, incarnate Jesus in the world because Jesus is the source of their goodness and generosity. Unlike the workers who work for money, we, the workers of the kingdom of God, work so that others join us in the love of God and living his Way, his Truth and his Life. We want those we encounter to experience the joys of the faithful followers of Christ and, when they do, our own joy increases.

As the psalmist says:

The LORD is kind and full of compassion

Slow to anger and rich in mercy.

The LORD is good to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

One of our great failures of recent generations has been the disregard with which we treated creation. Yet rather than punish us creation still wants to help us and will renew itself if we would only allow it to do so. This creation which is God's creation mirrors the wisdom and mercy of God to uplift us and spring back to life. It will only do so if we ask it by our actions

Lord, we need your infinite mercy to do this by showing our true love for our planet.