

## **Homily for 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year 2020.**

**“I am the salvation of all people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.”**

These words taken from today’s Entry Antiphon, should help us to realise just how close the Lord is to us when we cry to Him in our distress.

The Word of God comes as a continual invitation to expand the horizons of our hearts and minds so that we may understand something of the goodness and generosity of the God whom we seek.

**“Yes, the heavens are as high above the earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.”**

We see this truth unfold in the parable of today’s Gospel. Some of you may remember the time when a labourer would stand at an appointed place hoping that he would find work for the day, hoping that someone would come along and hire him for a day’s wage.

We might imagine this scene as depicted in today’s Gospel. The landowner going out to hire workers for his vineyard. How would I react if I were one of those who had done a heavy day’s work in all the heat? Would I begrudge the landowner’s generosity towards those who had not worked as hard as myself and yet had received the same amount of money.

Or how would I react if I were one of those who had been called at the ninth or the eleventh hour? Would I be grateful for the opportunity to be usefully employed and to receive a day’s wage?

I remember a former parishioner of mine, Timothy, who had a very gifted intellect. He attended Cambridge University and during his time there and for several years afterwards was influenced by Marxist ideology. He felt such ideology was the answer to many of the world’s problems.

In his later years he came to visit me and asked to be Received into the Catholic Church and I felt very privileged to prepare him and to receive him into Full Communion. He would sometimes bitterly regret the years he had wasted pursuing Marxism and had failed to discover the truth and beauty of the Catholic Faith and of coming to know Jesus Christ.

I remember him telling me that he found great consolation in today’s parable of the workers in the vineyard; and how good and gracious the Lord had been

to him by calling him into His kingdom at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. This parable gave him renewed hope.

Perhaps we might interpret the parable as not so much describing different individuals but describing our own way of relating to the Good News of the Kingdom. Have we missed opportunities of growing in the knowledge and love of Jesus and of bearing witness to Him in the context of our daily lives? Have we squandered some of the graces we have received; have we been unaware of the great goodness of the Lord; have we sought to imitate the Lord whom the psalmist describes in these terms:

**“The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in love. How good is the Lord to all, compassionate to all His creatures.”**

We are asked to take to heart the truth that Lord’s ways are not our ways and to pray for the humility to be willing to change our ways so that the Lord may be more clearly seen in our lives. Let us be willing to admit that we have made mistakes and misjudged others and to be willing to apologise. Saint Augustine said: **“To grow is to change and to become perfect is to have changed often.”**

Let us ask our Lord that however many years of our lives remain that we may spend it in joyful service of Him and of His kingdom.

**“I will bless You day after day and praise Your name for ever.**

**The Lord is great, highly to be praised, His greatness cannot be measured.”**