

## SEPTEMBER 20, 2020 - 25<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

One day a lady told me, "I have one favorite story in the gospel. It's the workers in the vineyard: the story of today's gospel." She said this because she was a convert. This story gives her a lot of consolation. This year, 8 adults were baptized in this parish. One of newly baptized was over 90 years old. He went through all the RCIA programs. This gospel passage may give courage to all the newly baptized.

In today's gospel, the ones who came first to the vineyard complained to the landlord because it seemed to favor the idler at the expense of the hard worker. It looked unfair for them.

Who do you think is you in the vineyard? Are you the one who came early? Or, are you the one who came at the last hour? Or in the middle? In the bible, the ones who came first are the Pharisees and the ones who came late are the gentiles and sinners. Even though the Pharisees worked very hard, they despised others and were full of envy. However, the gentiles and sinners really thanked God for the salvation they got free in spite of their sinfulness.

We cannot claim that God should be fair to us according to our works, because we are not perfect in our Christian lives. We cannot demand God to give us fair reward. We can just express our gratitude for what he has given us free.

Jesus shows us how merciful God is through this gospel. When we make mistakes,

he tells us what is right, but he also gives us another chance. God is just, but at the same time he is very merciful to us.

There are two types among saints. One type is that they became saints after their conversion. St. Paul did, and St. Augustine did. Some saints were sinners, like the prostitutes and tax collectors before their conversion. They were called by Jesus and became the laborers of the kingdom of God.

The others type is that they had known Jesus from the beginning of their lives, and dedicated their entire lives to Jesus and his mission.

We love all saints. It's not important when we come to know Jesus and how long we have lived our Christian lives. The important thing is that we are called by Jesus. We are working in the vineyard of God. There should be no envy for others. We thank Jesus for calling us to participate in proclaiming his kingdom.

Fr. James