

Devout Christians may find it hard to stomach that someone who repents on his death-bed is admitted to the kingdom no less than those who have struggled and suffered all their lives for what is right... but "my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord."

**GLORIA:**

Glory to God in the high-est, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**The Creed:**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became

man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**1st Reading: Isaiah 55:6-9**

Turn to the Lord in urgent prayer; for he never ignores the prayer of the humble. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**Responsorial: Psalm 144:2-3, 8-9, 17-18**

R./: The Lord is near to all who call him 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. (R./) 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. (R./) The Lord is just in all his ways and loving in all his deeds. He is close to all who call him, who call on him from their hearts. (R./)

**2nd Reading: Philipians 1:20-24, 27**

Though Paul wants to be with Christ in heaven, he will serve the Gospel as long as God wills it. It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel.

**Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16**

The parable of the workers in the vineyard; God welcomes all into his kingdom. Jesus said to his disciples: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vine-

yard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard."

When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage.

Now when the first came they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

*-Wishing you and your loved ones a very lovely Sunday.*

**Fr. Gregory Umunna**

**ST. STEPHEN'S R C CHURCH BLAIRGOWRIE**

⇒ St. Mary's Coupar Angus

⇒ St. Luan's Alyth

**25th Sunday of the Ordinary Time. Year A. 20/9/20**

**Parish website:** <https://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk/>



**Warm Welcome to all our Parishioners and visitors .**

**Whether you are visiting our parish or just moved into the area, please feel very welcome ... thanks.**

**Parish diary for the Week:**

**Sunday Masses:** St. Steph. Vigil: 6.30pm, 9.30am, 11.00am.

**Mon:**

**Tue** - Mass at St. Steph 10.00am.

**Wed** - Mass at St. Steph 7.00pm. St. Pius Pietrecina (Padre Pio)

**Thurs** - Mass at St. Luan's 10.00am;

**Frid** - Mass at St. Luan's 10.00am.

**Sund** - St. Steph. Vigil: 6.30pm, 9.30am, 11.00am.

**Mass intentions for the week**

- ⇒ For all who are struggling to cope with the pandemic.
- ⇒ For Laura Campbell and Duncan Campbell (anniversary)
- ⇒ For Michael JF Power (anniversary)
- ⇒ For Robert Duffy who passed on this week
- ⇒ Janet Melville who passed on this week

*Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; ...that he may have mercy, ... for he will abundantly pardon.*

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

*"The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel." —Pope Francis*



**Fam. Rosary, adoration.**

Wednesdays 6pm, and mass for the sick last Wednesdays of the month.

**Mass with St. Step P. Sch.**

1st Fri & 3rd Fri. of the month; end of terms and core events masses.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

6.00pm every Saturday and 9am every Sunday.

**Divine Mercy Devotion.**

Tuesday after morning mass. Please join us.

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Gregory Umunna MA, Ph.D.

**Phone:** 01250872171. **Email:** peacegreg2002@yahoo.com.

**Address:** 8, Bank Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE.

**H/Teacher:** St. Steph's P. S. Mr. Simon Mckell. Ph: 871950.

**Parish Volunteers:** **Catechists:** Linda Forsyth

Catechism Classes for 1st Holy Communion and Confirmation every Monday 6.00pm in the Hall.

**Parish Safeguarding Coordinator:** Mrs. Linda Forsyth.

Email: lady.linda@live.co.uk 01828632024.

**Parish Webmaster:** Mr. Irek Kawalinski. irekkowalinski@gmail.com

**Music Directors:** Mr. Tom Buckham and Mrs. Gail McIntyre.

**Responsible Person for Euch. Ministers:** Mr. Alan Scott

**Responsible Person for Lectors:** Mr. John Thompson

**Responsible Group- Parish Social Justice issues:** SSV.P.

**Financial Adviser:** Mr. Mike Coyle.

**Responsible Person for Altar Servers:** Mr. Rolly Colanse.

**Hall Reservations for Events:** Contact no: 872171.

**Hospital Chaplains:** Please call: N/wells 01382611282;

**P.R.I.:** 01738259371. \*Please let the priest know if you are having a long stay at the hospital and would like a visit .

**Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:** Please make appointment with the Priest before any arrangement and date.

**Parish Website:** [www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk](http://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk)

**Diocese of Dunkeld Scottish Charity No:**

**Prayers please:** Please remember the following in your prayers:=== James Warden, Michael Rolls, Ron Crisp, Eilidh MacInnes LieseLotte Stuart, Neil McDowall Michael O'Malley.

**Have you prayed your Rosary today?**



**Parish Finances**

We know that the present difficult situation affects individuals and households in many ways. However, if you feel able to support the parish in whatever way you could, (direct debit, occasional or one-off), is an account number:

**Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland, 14 Allan Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6AD**

**Sort code:- 83-1633**

**Account No:- 00240708**

**Account name:- Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dunkeld No3 Char TST St Stephens RC Church**

Many thanks for supporting your parish.

**Reflections:**

**To The Work**

Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16

**Definitions**

Landowner - represents Christ  
 Vineyard - represents the Church  
 Laborers - represents Christians  
 End of day - represents judgment  
 Reward - Represents eternal salvation

On God's Generous love

Sometimes we question God's dealings with other people because they seem to receive better treatment from him than we think they

deserve. They do not measure up to our often impossible standards. They may be lazy and unreliable. Perhaps they argue and fight constantly. Or they may not have our talents and skills. Consequently, in our opinion, they are unworthy of any favour or special status. So why would God treat them differently?

Ironically, as much as we want God to be involved in our lives and as much as we wish to be part of the kingdom of heaven, we do not always want to let God be God. Instead, we want God to be God as we would choose, relating to people on our terms and influenced by our prejudices and biases.

Fortunately, however, God's ways are very different from our ways. Unlike many of us, God is not envious or spiteful. He does not have a 'pecking order', placing some people at the top and relegating others to the bottom. God has no favourites. As far as God is concerned, everyone has a unique dignity and equal worth.

It can be very difficult to appreciate that, with God, all people are special. Because everyone is important, God's generosity is marvellous and God's mercy is limitless. That is how God chooses to be God and we are challenged to respect God's will. After all, God is our Creator and we are God's creatures. God has rights too and these rights demand that we let God be God.

The lesson of the parable of the landowner hiring workers for his vineyard is that it challenges us to be grateful to God for what he gives us, and exhorts us to avoid feeling cheated and complaining about the seeming good luck and better fortunes of other people. Also, if we believe that we are made in the image and likeness of God then we need to imitate his generosity and compassion in our behaviour towards other people.

Rather than applying human standards to God, we need to apply God's standards to ourselves.

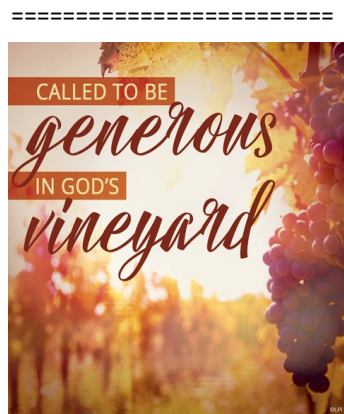
The Good News is that God's love and mercy are available to all, saints and sinners alike. When we are privileged to know that God loves us in all circumstances and saves us from our sins, why would we permit rivalry to emerge between ourselves and others whom God treats differently from how we treat them? Is it not sufficient to be assured that our eternal destiny with God is secure because of our faithfulness to Christ's great commandment, without being jealous and resentful of other sinners' opportunities for salvation?

When God is generous and merciful to other people, he is not being unfair to us. He is simply being God. Our understanding of God, then, needs to change and we need to let God be God.

—A reflection by John Litteton

Personal Reflections

- ⇒ Do I feel nourished after holy communion? Do I feel a sense of relief that Mass is over?
- ⇒ Has the Mass strengthened our identity as a community?
- ⇒ Do I take away a message, thought or prayer for the week?



Foods 4 Thought:

**CONGREGATION FOR THE CLERGY**

Contd from last week ....

17. Moreover, mere repetitive action that fails to have an impact upon people's concrete lives remains a sterile attempt at survival, which is usually welcomed by general indifference. If the Parish does not exude that spiritual dynamic of evangelisation, it runs the risk of becoming self-referential and fossilised, offering experiences that are devoid of evangelical flavour and missionary drive, of interest only to small groups.

18. The renewal of evangelisation requires a new approach with diverse pastoral proposals, so that the Word of God and the sacramental life can reach everyone in a way that is coherent with their state in life. Ecclesial membership in our present age is less a question of birthplace, much less where someone grew up, as it is about being part of a community by adoption[21], where the faithful have a more extensive experience of the Word of God than they do of being a body made up of many members, with everyone working for the common good (1 Co 12:12-27).

19. Over and above places and reasons for membership, the Parish community is the human context wherein the evangelising work of the Church is carried out, where Sacraments are celebrated and where charity is exercised, all with missionary zeal, which, apart from being an intrinsic part of pastoral action, is a litmus test of its authenticity. In this present age, marked at times by marginalisation and solitude, the Parish community is called to be a living sign of the proximity of Christ through fraternal bonds, ever attentive to new forms of poverty.

20. In view of what has been said so far, it is necessary to identify perspectives that allow for the renewal of "traditional" Parish structures in terms of

mission. This is the heart of the desired pastoral conversion, which must touch the proclamation of the Word of God, the sacramental life and the witness of charity, in other words the essential areas in which the Parish grows and conforms to the Mystery in which it believes.

21. Perusing the Acts of the Apostles, one realises the transformative effect of the Word of God, that interior power that brings about the conversion of hearts. The word is the food that nourishes the Lord's disciples and makes them witnesses to the Gospel in the various circumstances of life. The Scriptures contain a prophetic impetus that makes them into a living force. It is necessary to provide instruction on how to listen and mediate on the Word of God through a variety of different approaches to proclamation[22], adopting clear and comprehensible means of communication that announce the Lord Jesus according to the ever new witness of the kerygma[23].

22. The celebration of the Eucharistic mystery is "the source and summit of the whole Christian life"[24] and accordingly, the essential moment for building up the Parish community. Therein, the Church becomes aware of the meaning of her name (Ecclesia): the coming together of the People of God to praise, implore, intercede and give thanks. In celebrating the Eucharist, the Christian community welcomes the living presence of the Crucified and Risen Lord, receiving the announcement of the entire mystery of salvation.

To be continued...

Still on the Generosity of God. God is generous to a fault

The gospel reading of this Sunday is quaintly called the 'labourers in the vineyard'. Nowadays, we do not have the so-called labourers, only workers or employees.

The parable brings us back to the times of seasonal workforces, of men standing around in

the early morning sun, in market squares, waiting to be hired, and of employers picking, randomly and on superficial first impressions, the more likely good workers.

It all smacks of unfairness, uncertainty and insecurity, of a full twelve-hour day being worked for a penny, in the blazing sun and scorching heat of the Middle East.

So how is the underlying moral of the parable story relevant to us in the 21st century?

At a first reading, the gospel seems to be at odds with real life. The daily wage in those gospel days was the usual one of a Roman denarius a day, in modern coinage about €100. The day's work started at six in the morning and ends at sunset. Not for the lazy or faint of heart!

The owner of the vineyard employs casual labour, for a day or for some hours at a time in temporary or seasonal work at best. Not a permanent pensionable job in sight!

There are also a number of things quite odd about the employer. While he does have a vineyard or farm manager, it is he himself who is up at the crack of dawn to do the early morning hiring. He believes in paying, quoting his own words 'whatever is right'. So much for the 'minimum wage'!

When evening comes, he has his manager pay each of the workers €100, irrespective of the number of hours each had worked. He really has a strange employment policy and sense of generosity.

In this sense, God does not pay for the hours of work done.

God pays each person because each has respected the contract, the bargain, the agreement or covenant made with each person.

No exceptions! No one omitted! God does not do exceptions.

God keeps his word and remembers those who have kept faith with him.

God is simply generous with his gifts and his grace.

—A refl. by Michael J McCann