

Parish Meeting Prayers

For use in September, 2020

Introduction

Leader Gratitude is the antidote to greed. Wanting more than we need or envying one who receives the same as we do - though they seem undeserving - are countered by God's generosity. Accepting this is a source of joy.

Opening Prayer

All Generous God, fill us with gratitude, not comparing ourselves to others, but simply grateful for the blessings we enjoy. Help us to allow you to be the judge while we remain free of the need to judge another. We pray with gratitude in Jesus' name. Amen.

Word of God Matthew 20:1-16a

Reader A reading from the Gospel of Matthew *(The reading is on the reverse side).*
(Pause for silent Reflection.)

Optional Discuss these questions in two's or three's.

1. Have you ever felt that you did not get what you deserved? How can one deal with those feelings?
2. How is joy connected to the freedom from having to judge the fairness of God's gifts to others?

Response (Taken from Matthew 20:1-16a)

Side 1 "You have made them equal to us who bore the day's burden and the heat."

Side 2 When we find ourselves grumbling, Lord, lift us to a higher place of gratitude.

Side 1 "What if I wish to give this one the same as you?"

Side 2 Envy destroys a life of joy and freedom. Restore us, Lord, to your way of living.

Side 1 "Thus the last will be first and the first will be last."

Side 2 Jesus often turns the tables of ordinary thinking. Help us, Lord, to recognize your teaching on gratitude for your gifts.

Petitions Individuals add intentions to remember here.

Closing Prayer

All God of joy, we thank you for all you have given us. Keep us always grateful for your goodness to us, who seek to be true disciples of Jesus. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner
who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard.
After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage,
he sent them into his vineyard.

Going out about five o’clock,
The landowner found others standing around, and said to them,
‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’
They answered, ‘Because no one has hired us.’
He said to them, ‘You too go into my vineyard.’

When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman,
‘Summon the laborers and give them their pay,
beginning with the last and ending with the first.’
When those who had started about five o’clock came,
each received the usual daily wage.
So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more,
but each of them also got the usual wage.

And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying,
‘These last ones worked only one hour,
and you have made them equal to us,
who bore the day’s burden and the heat.’

He said to one of them in reply,
‘My friend, I am not cheating you.
Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?
Take what is yours and go.

What if I wish to give this last one the same as you?
Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money?
Are you envious because I am generous?
Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.’ ”