



21. August 2019
„God himself is our reward“

Mat 20,1-16

Now the kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing around, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" Because no one has hired us," they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner saying, The men who came last have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the lastcomer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why should you be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

The way God acts is sometimes not to understand at first sight, to our human mind. So it can easily happen that we think that those who worked longer are right to expect a higher pay than those who have worked only briefly. We would also think that this is fair. Yet, this would be the transmission of our human reality to the kingdom of God, which is the Lord in this example overcomes.

I am thinking of a concrete example. There is someone born from birth Catholic and since he can think, he has sincerely endeavored to keep the commandments of God and to serve the Lord. In the church someone is kneeling beside him, who has found God only very shortly after a wild and disorderly life. When the faithful are invited to receive Holy Communion, they both come to the communion bank, the one who has been working for a long time in the Lord's vineyard and the other who has just begun. Both receive the same pay they receive the holy communion.

This makes it understandable that the Kingdom of God is above all love. God invites all to live and work in this love. It is the gift of his grace, the grace on which we all live: the one who has been with her for a long time and the one who takes up this grace just before the end of the life.

God's action is focused on the salvation of man, all his endeavor is that the man finds home, enters the Father's house and be it only in the last second of life. When man accepts grace and converts to God, he is saved.

Therefore, one can not simply transfer to the kingdom of God what we take for granted to the human kingdom. Eternal life is promised to us if we keep the commandments of God and follow the Lord. There can be no jealousy of anyone ending up in the kingdom of God. On the contrary, there should reign the joy of which Jesus speaks in the parable of the Father who receives his lost son again (*see Lk 15,11-32*).

The generosity of God to the last, takes nothing away from the reward of our efforts to work in the kingdom of God. The reward is God Himself, which we all receive.

There will be no envy in eternity. Everyone will be perfect. No one will figure out what he did and whether he is at a disadvantage to the other. Everyone will be infinitely grateful and praise together with the angels and saints. God will assign his place to everyone.

This reality, which is waiting for us, should already be realized on earth, in which our heart, which will be more deeply converted, should know God in his goodness better and allow Himself to be transformed by Him. Then we will no longer see if we have done more than other people. We will understand each other better and better as gifted by the Lord and our longing will grow, that the other people recognize God and live as his children!