

25th Sun A.....

God, the Poor Business Steward

Refrain... Father We Adore You / Hearts / Love

Introduction...

When we read the story in today's Gospel
we come up against a difficult teaching of Jesus...
God is hard to figure out...
or as the first reading from Isaias put it...
God's ways are not our ways and God's thoughts are not our thoughts.

I Answers

We like to have the answers, to have things figured out.
TV shows and movies always end with the answer.
Game shows on TV have people looking for the right answers –
Jeopardy or Wheel of Fortune are two examples.

We Americans like our questions answered, our problems dealt with...
we tend to be a practical people.

That's why God can be so difficult to understand at times,
and indeed, life can be difficult to understand at times.
We wonder why God allows things to happen –
if we were in charge we certainly would do it a different way.
Jesus himself could not always understand his loving Father.
*"Father, if it's possible let this cup pass from me...yet not as I will it, but as
you will it."*

II The Gospel

Let's go back to the Gospel.

If this were your farm,

and you hired workers at different times of the day,

some to work 12 hours, some to work 8 hrs,

and still others to work only 4 hrs...

would you pay all of them the same wage?

That would cause pandemonium.

Your workers would surely become disruptive soon after they saw what was happening.

After all, why should some work all day and others a small part of the day, and all get the same pay? That's crazy.

Why did Jesus tell this story?

This Gospel story is telling us that loving God's *view* is different than ours.

God looks at things differently.

and it's not always easy for us to appreciate God's view.

III A Story

How does God look at our world?

Story:

At the Seattle Special Olympics a number of years ago nine contestants, all physical or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash.

At the gun they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a relish to run to the finish and win. All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back... every one of them. One girl with Down's Syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "this will make it better." Then all linked arms and walked together to the finish line.

Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes. People who were there are still telling the story.

In my opinion this story shows us how God would look upon our world.

It's not about winning all of the time.

Rather, it's having about compassion on others,

as those kids had compassion on the little guy who fell.

It's about helping others and not just concerned about oneself.

That's how God looks upon our world.

That's how Jesus lived.

Doesn't that describe how God looks upon all of the workers in today's Gospel.

God sees them with compassion and is generous to them.

Can we understand this?

Or are we worried about the practical, business-oriented, common sense way of seeing things

which scoffs at the way the owner of the vineyard runs his business.

But God would ask us:

... Are you envious because I am generous?

How do we look at life?

How do we think God looks at life?

Do you have an errant child or grandchild?

How does God look at him or her?

Do you have a sinful habit that you just can't get control of...

an anger or a jealousy or a lust or a laziness?

How do you look upon this?

How do you think God looks upon it?

Do you have a neighbor or a fellow worker who drives you crazy?
How does God look upon him or her?
Maybe you can't change him or her, but you certainly can pray for him or her!
Do you?

A final question...
what about the tragedies in our life or the life of others?

Recently I stood at the Trauma Unit bedside of my grandniece Tabi, a beautiful 34 year old young woman. She had been in a terrible auto accident and she lay in Mercy Trauma unit for seven days.

The doctors told us that the machines were keeping her alive, her brain activity was negligible.

A small part of our family and her fiancée and four of her closest friends were there to pray our goodbyes on final day of her life.

Her mother and fiancée decided to donate her organs to others.

We were sad and mourned the loss of our beloved Tabi.

We could not understand loving God's will, but we accepted it as best we could.

We understood that Tabi was now with loving God.

And we understood that life would come out of this tragic death.

Sometimes we don't understand God.

Can we trust loving God?

Can we let Jesus be our shepherd?

Conclusion...

O God, help me to look upon my world with eyes of compassion.

Help me to see dandelions instead of weeds,

to see signs of your presence everywhere,

and not just problems to be solved.

Help me to be gentle with myself, and with others.

Help me to trust in you and to try to do your will in my world.

May this Eucharist which I am participating in,

and especially may the Body and Blood of Jesus,

help me to see the way you see and to love the way you love.

Amen.