



Diocese of
OWENSBORO

LITURGY OF THE WORD TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

HYMN

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending
(sung to the tune of “God of Day and God of Darkness”)

**God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store:
Nature’s wonder, Jesus’ wisdom, costly cross, grave’s shattered door,
Gifted by you, we turn to you, offering up ourselves in praise;
Thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**

**Skills and time are ours for pressing toward the goals of Christ, your Son;
All at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the Church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;
Born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.**

INTRODUCTION

All sign themselves with the sign of the cross saying, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

Leader: Let us praise God, who fills our hearts and home with peace.
Blessed be God for ever.

All respond: Blessed be God for ever.

Sing or recite the *Gloria* together:

**Glory to God in the highest,
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.**

Leader: Let us pray,

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law
upon love of you and of our neighbor,
grant that, by keeping your precepts,
we may merit to attain eternal life.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

READINGS

It is encouraged that someone other than the leader should proclaim the readings of the day from a Bible. Otherwise, daily readings may be found at usccb.org/bible/readings, and audio recordings of the daily readings may be found at usccb.org/bible/readings-audio.cfm.

First reading: Isaiah 55:6-9

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18

Refrain (all together): **The Lord is near to all who call upon him.**

Every day will I bless you,
and I will praise your name forever and ever.
Great is the LORD and highly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

Refrain (all together): **The Lord is near to all who call upon him.**

The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and of great kindness.
The LORD is good to all
and compassionate toward all his works.

Refrain (all together): **The Lord is near to all who call upon him.**

The LORD is just in all his ways
and holy in all his works.
The LORD is near to all who call upon him,
to all who call upon him in truth.

Refrain (all together): **The Lord is near to all who call upon him.**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a

Gospel (All stand for the reading of the Gospel. A layperson omits the greeting, “The Lord be with you” and proceeds to “A reading from the holy Gospel According to”): Matthew 20:1-16a

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

This week we have a reflection from Fr. Jerry Riney, pastor of St. Stephen Cathedral:

“That’s not fair!” How many times have you heard someone say that? Children bickering over a toy, a swing, or an iPad, siblings arguing about household chores, students resenting extra attention given to another, employees thinking their boss is showing favoritism, a coach who plays her child more than the others—“that’s not fair!”

Reflecting on the Gospel the Church gives us for today (Matthew 20:1-16a), we may find ourselves identifying with the grumblers who have worked 12 hours in the hot scorching sun, and are paid the same as those who work one hour. “That’s not fair!”

Of course, we all know LIFE is NOT FAIR!

Yet, today’s Gospel is not about fairness but about God’s radical generosity. To help us understand better this underlying message, let us remember a couple of things:

The adjective “daily” is found four times in the Gospel of Matthew: one time in the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:11) and three times in today’s puzzling parable. In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus teaches us to ask for “our daily bread.” We are not to ask for more than we need, but enough to see us through that day. Indeed to do this is an act of trusting in God to provide what we need for today, just today, and not to anticipate tomorrow’s needs. Be satisfied with our “daily” bread.

Jesus knew that those who worked 12 hours as well as those who worked one hour needed to put food on the table for their loved ones. Especially in those days, people lived from one day to another; families relied upon food for that day. Jesus is not short—changing those who worked 12 hours, but being extremely sensitive to the needs of those who worked only one hour to support themselves and their families. Indeed, this Gospel is not about fairness, but God’s staggering generosity. Indeed, we trust in the promise that Jesus will give us what we need each day to live as a missionary disciple of the Lord.

Furthermore, is this parable not also about WHEN people hear God’s call? The Jewish people heard the call first, but some Gentiles were coming into the life of the Church and the life of Jesus much later in life, some even on their deathbed. Yet, all receive the same reward of eternal life!

Thus, Jesus shows us the universality of the new Church, as well as the importance of compassion and mercy in the kingdom of God. The employer (God) responds to those who have worked all day in the brutal harsh heat that they are being paid the “agreed-upon wage“. They have no grievance if God chooses to be generous to others. It’s not the amount of service given but the attitude of love and generosity behind that service.

Even for us who have been baptized into Jesus Christ and into the Community of the Church as infants—truthfully, some of us experience real conversion as a teenager, some as a young single, some in mid-life, and some very late in life. It’s not about being fair that all get the same reward of eternal life! We really should rejoice

with the “latecomers”, and be grateful for the privilege of serving as workers/servants in the Vineyard (the community of the Church)!

This weekend is Catechetical Sunday, and our theme is taken from Saint Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians: “I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you. “Today we thank our catechists, remembering that parents are the first teachers, the first catechists (ones who echo the Word) to their children in the ways of faith. Thank you parents for “stepping up to the plate” as you seek to form and mold your children in faith, love, and kindness. We are grateful also for our other catechists in our parishes and in our Catholic schools, who help to pass on the gift of faith by word and deed.

Let us be grateful that we have not a fair God (who of us would survive?), but a tremendously generous and merciful God!

Additionally, you can also find video reflections from the USCCB on the readings here:
<http://www.usccb.org/bible/reflections/>.

Observe a period of silence for reflection on the Word of God. You may want to ask the following questions:

What word or phrase is stirring in your heart?
How can you apply this message to your daily life?

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader: Let us give glory to the great God, presenting our needs with trust and confidence.

You or members of your family can be invited to speak out their intercessions, to which all reply, “Lord, hear our prayer.” It would be good to include a prayer for the end of the coronavirus pandemic and a return to public Sunday Eucharist.

Leader: God of infinite mercy, hear the prayers of your people — who give praise for all the good things that come from you, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Response: Amen.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus,
I believe that You
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment
receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

ACT OF THANKSGIVING

Make a prayer of thanksgiving. This can be your own personal prayer of thanksgiving, a canticle of praise from scripture, or you may choose one of the following Psalms: Psalm 100; Psalm 113; Psalm 118:1-4, 19-29; Psalm 136; Psalm 150

CONCLUDING RITE

In solidarity with our diocese, here you could include Pope Francis' prayer to Mary for protection against the coronavirus found at the beginning of the *Diocese of Owensboro Prayer Companion*.

Leader: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All sign themselves with the cross.

Response: Amen

As an option here, you could add "Let us offer each other the sign of peace," extending a sign of Christ's peace to your loved ones by way of a hug, kiss, or whatever would be most appropriate for your situation.

HYMN

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**Treasure, too, you have entrusted, gain through powers your grace conferred;
Ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the Gospel Word.
Open wide our hands in sharing, as we heed Christ's ageless call,
Healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.**

Robert Edwards, 1915—2006

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