

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 144)

ANTIPHON: The Lord is near to all who call him.

RESPONSE: The Lord is near to all who call him.

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

Or

I am the Good Shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 55:6-9; Philippians 1:20-24, 27; Matthew 20:1-16

NEXT WEEK (26th Sunday of Year A) Ezekiel 18:25-28; Psalm 24; Philippians 2:1-11; Matthew 21:28-32

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An ever-generous God



20th September 2026 25th Sunday Year A

In the gospel parable we might wonder is this the way God acts? It doesn't seem fair to pay everyone the same wage, whether they have worked the entire day or for an hour, even if it was agreed to by the workers at the beginning.

Then, at the parable's end, the landowner says to these upset workers, 'Why be envious when I am generous?'

But we could say it's unjust; what about a fair go for all, not simply those who waited all day for work. Justice is central to the parable, but justice as a form of compassion, ensuring everyone gets paid a living wage, from the first to the last. However, if the wage is a metaphor of salvation, whether we've worked for a long time or not isn't really the issue; we can't earn salvation, it's a gift, and wanting more of it doesn't make sense.

We begin to see how generosity and envy too are at the heart of this gospel, and how envy is a response to a perceived lack of generosity on God's part. It distracts us from what we have been given, and we fixate on what others have – such as money, house, car, status – and that's what we want. The media thrives on this, whether social or otherwise, as the cartoon character called Envy reminds us: she has 'a big appetite for everything she doesn't have.'

This is why gratitude is important, because it enables us to give thanks for what we have been given. So too trust: trust in what Jesus has promised us. As we come to trust in God

we begin to realise that God provides for us and we're able to give thanks for the gift of Jesus' life.

In doing so, we come to see that God gives us all we need and gradually we begin to recognise that we have been living in a self-enclosed world where scarcity and ambition rule. It's then that we come to understand our need to be free of envy if our lives are to be open to the generosity of God; and it's not just St Francis, giving up his lavish lifestyle, who reveals this to us, but it's to be seen in our own lives. Or are we too locked into a way of life that prevents us from seeing it, and so denies us the freedom to live in God's love?

In the second reading Paul, in prison, sees clearly the meaning of his life: 'Life to me, of course, is Christ.' Jesus is our life too and the gift of himself is more than enough. He gives himself to us so we might give away to others what we have received. While the first reading from Isaiah speaks of God's love for his people.

God's thoughts and ways are beyond our understanding, and yet God is close to us and rich in forgiveness. This is the ever-generous God who gives us everything we'll ever need.

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