Matthew 20: 1-16
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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 nine o'clock,
he saw others standing idle in the marketplace,
and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard,
and I will give you what is just.'
So they went off.
And he went out again around noon,
and around three o'clock, and did likewise.
Going out about five o'clock,
he 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."

Our Scripture Reflection

“It’s not fair!”....they thought back then, and so would many people today. Why should a group of lazy louts be allowed to work just one hour and receive the same benefits as people who had been working all day long? That's how Grace works, teaches Our Lord. That's why it's called amazing. And when you find yourself in a huge hole because of something stupidly sinful that you did, you will treasure His Grace more than you could ever imagine.

Food for your Journey

People talk about the daily grind, where one day folds into another, and there doesn't seem to be much purpose in life. The daily can get quite oppressive. I think everybody goes in and out of that state where it seems intolerable, especially since our culture encourages us to devalue it. Watch television and you'll see that the daily is the realm of the boring stuff, while the important stuff happens when we are partying or on vacation or doing something out of the ordinary. But it's a self-defeating way to look at things because the daily is where we live most of the time. We have to do the dishes. We have to do the laundry. We can either regard these things as a terrible burden, or we can cultivate a sense that the daily can be more than it seems. Sometimes it is going to seem like a grind, but we should try to be receptive to the times when something else, maybe something sacred, breaks through. ... In Orthodoxy, G.K. Chesterton said that though God makes daisies every day, he never gets tired of making them. That is God's strength -- to exult in the daily rather than to despair over it.
--Kathleen Norris, "The Dakotas, the dishes and the divine," Bearings Online, December 7, 2015.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, How could I ever be worthy of the incredible sacrifice Your Son made for me on Calvary? So many times I do what I know I should not do. Forgive me, Lord, and with the help of Your Grace give me the wisdom and strength I need to walk the right path. Amen