

It is not easy to understand the mind of God. He sees goodness where we see none; he showers blessings where none seem to be deserved. Yet even with our limited vision we can be sure he is near us whenever we call him.

...the **LAST**  
will be  
**FIRST**  
and the **FIRST**  
LAST.



This could be seen as a story about wasters. Hanging around waiting for work, and not seeming too enthusiastic for work: 'they were standing idle'. Eventually they all got work and the payment was unfair. They all got the same. The story is about more than a day's wages but about how God looks on each of us.

It is a story about the good-natured God, generous beyond all expectations. The God whose love is poured unconditionally into everyone. No matter what our lives are like, God looks on us as he looked on the idle ones – they were in the end willing to work, to do something useful. God sees the goodness in each of us.

Rather than judging others who get more than we think they deserve; we can look at God's goodness to us. No matter what our lives are like, we are loved with forgiveness. The good we would like to do is pleasing to God even if we do not get around to it. God sees the heart. Where you or I might see a waster, he sees someone trying to make the best of his or her life.

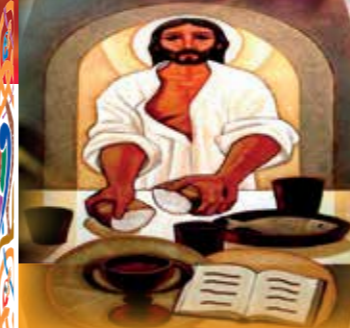
Like the parent loving each child unconditionally, God loves the same way. We can be grateful for that, rather than envious of how he treats others.

*Lord, in your love, give me life.*

Donal Neary SJ, Editor Sacred Heart Messenger

**Jesus' Story** *Fr. Liam Hickey*

I met a man in a shop. He said that he had only six weeks to live. He said that he was glad that he got some time to know. His wife went away from home years ago, and his son had a row with him and emigrated. 'Now,' he said, 'they are both coming back to see me, and we will be all re-united.' God waits lovingly for us to see the light.



### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brothers and sisters, .....  
May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive with favour, O Lord, we pray, the offerings of your people, that what they profess with devotion and faith may be theirs through these heavenly mysteries.  
Through Christ our Lord.

### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you. *And with your spirit.*  
Lift up your hearts.  
We lift them up to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right and just.

### SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

### AFTER THE CONSECRATION

*The mystery of faith.*  
We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

### INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, .....  
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.**

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Graciously raise up, O Lord, those you renew with this Sacrament, that we may come to possess your redemption both in mystery and in the manner of our life.  
Through Christ our Lord.

### CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.  
*And with your spirit.*  
May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**  
Go in peace, **Thanks be to God.**

my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks.  
Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.  
**The word of the Lord.**  
**Thanks be to God.**

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**Ps. 144:2-3, 8-9, 17-18**

**R. The Lord is close to all who call him.**

- 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]
- 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]
- 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]

### SECOND READING

**Philippians 1: 20 - 24, 27**

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians**

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results - I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake. Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

**The word of the Lord.**  
**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!**  
**Blessings on the King who comes, in the name of the Lord!**  
**Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens! Alleluia!**

### GOSPEL Matthew 20: 1-16

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.**

Jesus said to his disciples: '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 round, 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. "The men who came last" they said "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 last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first last.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

*All bow for following three lines:*  
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.



### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**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.**

### GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**  
The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**



### PENITENTIAL ACT

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us.....  
**Amen.**

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

### THE GLORIA

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.

### OPENING PRAYER

O God, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbour, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to attain eternal life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.....

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

### FIRST READING Isaiah 55: 6 - 9

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts,