

Sunday 25th (A) in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 20,1-16): Jesus told his disciples this parable, «The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard (...). When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager: ‘Call the workers and pay them their wage, beginning with the last and ending with the first’. Those who had come to work at the eleventh hour turned up and were given a denarius each (a silver coin).

»When it was the turn of the first, they thought they would receive more. But they, too, received a denarius each. So, on receiving it, they began to grumble against the landowner. They said: ‘These last hardly worked an hour, yet you have treated them the same as us who have endured the day's burden and heat’. The owner said to one of them: ‘Friend, I have not been unjust to you. Did we not agree on a denarius a day? So take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last the same as I give to you (...).

Speculation

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, the explanation of the Lord —that touches the subject matter of work— discovers a highly topical issue: in the picture an outbreak of tension materializes, just the outcome of the speculative reckoning of some laborers. Rather than complaining and grumbling at the householder, those hired in the first hour should have been pleased because some other "co-citizens" could also work.

Individual rights, when detached from a framework of duties which grants them their full meaning, can run wild, leading to an escalation of demands which is

effectively unlimited and indiscriminate. The current tendencies towards a short-term economy —sometimes very short-term— consequence of selfish speculation are morally unacceptable and need to be carefully evaluated. This requires further and deeper reflection on the meaning of economy and its goals, in addition to a profound adjustment with a broadminded criterion of the model to be developed.

—O Jesus, my Redeemer, you have come to save me because you have not thought of your rights but of my needs: your love —which spreads out "for free"— did not bear in mind the cost of my liberation.