



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

ANGELUS

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 24 September 2023

[[Multimedia](#)]

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno!*

Today's Gospel presents us with a surprising parable: the master of a vineyard goes out from the first dawn until evening to call in some workers, but in the end, he pays everyone equally, even those who had only worked one hour (cf. *Mt 20:1-16*). It would seem to be an injustice, but the parable is not to be read through wage criteria; rather, it intends to show us the criteria of God, who does not calculate our merits, but loves us as children.

Let us look more closely at two divine actions that emerge from the story. First, *God goes out at all hours to call us*; second, *He repays everyone with the same "coin"*.

First, God is he who *goes out at all hours to call us*. The parable says that the master "went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard" (v. 1), but then continues to go out at various times of the day until sunset, to look for those whom no one had yet hired to work. We thus understand that in the parable, not only the men are the ones who work, but above all God, who goes out all day without tiring. This is how God is: he does not wait for our efforts to come to us, he does not examine us to assess our merits before seeking us out, he does not give up if we are late in responding to him. On the contrary, he himself took the initiative and in Jesus "went out" — towards us, to show us his love. And he seeks us at all hours of the day, which, as Saint Gregory the Great states, represent the different stages and seasons of our life up to old age (cf. *Homilies on the Gospel*, 19). For his heart, it is never too late; he always seeks us and awaits us.

Let us not forget this: the Lord always seeks us and awaits us, always!

Precisely because he is so big-hearted, *God* — this is the second action — *repays everyone with the same “coin”*, which is his love. Here is the ultimate meaning of the parable: the labourers of the final hour are paid like the first because, in reality, God’s justice is a superior justice. It goes further. Human justice says to “give to each his own according to what he deserves”, while God’s justice does not measure love on the scales of our returns, our performance or our failures: God just loves us, he loves us because we are his children, and he does so with an unconditional love, a freely-given love.

Brothers and sisters, sometimes we risk having a “commercial” relationship with God, focusing more on our prowess than on his generosity and his grace. Sometimes even as a Church, instead of going out at all hours of the day and extending our arms to all, we can feel like we are top of the class, judging others who are far away, without thinking that God loves them too with the same love he has for us. And even in our relationships, which are the fabric of society, the justice we practise sometimes fails to break free from the cage of calculation, and we limit ourselves to giving according to what we receive, without daring to go the extra mile, without counting on the effectiveness of good done freely and of love offered with a generosity of heart. Brothers, sisters, let us ask ourselves: do I, a Christian, know how to go out towards others? Am I generous towards everyone, do I know how to give that extra understanding and forgiveness, as Jesus has done and does every day with me?

May Our Lady help us to convert to God’s measure: that of a love without measure.

After the Angelus, the Pope continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, today is World Day of Migrants and Refugees, whose theme [this year] is: “Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay”, to recall that to migrate should be a free choice, and never the only one possible. Indeed, the right to migrate has now become an obligation for many, whereas there ought to be the right to not emigrate, to remain in one’s own country. Every man and woman should be guaranteed the opportunity to live a dignified life in the society in which they are. Unfortunately, poverty, wars and the climate crisis force so many people to flee. We are thus all called to create communities that are ready and open to welcome, promote, accompany and integrate those who knock on our doors.

This challenge was at the heart of *Rencontres Méditerranéennes, which took place in recent days in Marseille*, and in whose concluding session I participated yesterday, travelling to the city, a crossroads of peoples and cultures.

I give special thanks to the bishops of the Italian Episcopal Conference who do everything they can to help our migrant brothers and sisters. We have just heard Archbishop Baturi explain this on the television programme, “*A Sua Immagine*”.

I greet you all, people of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and many countries, in particular the *Redemptoris Mater* International Diocesan Seminary of Cologne, in Germany. Likewise I greet the group of people affected by the rare disease known as ataxia, and their family members.

I renew my invitation to participate in the [Ecumenical Prayer Vigil](#), entitled “*Together*”, which will take place in Saint Peter’s Square this coming Saturday, 30 September, in preparation for the [Synodal Assembly which will begin on 4 October](#).

Let us recall beleaguered Ukraine, and pray for this people that is suffering so much.

I wish you all a happy Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*