

Dear Friends,

In today's Gospel reading, we hear the parable of workers in the vineyard. The landowner pays all of his workers a full day's wage regardless of the amount of time they individually worked. In the past, this parable has struck me as puzzling. Why should a person who works less get paid the same amount as the person who works more? The word that changed everything for me in this parable was "generous." This parable isn't about who works more or less. Rather it is about how generous God is.

The Prophet Isaiah teaches us that God's ways are above our ways in today's first reading. We see another example of this in the verses immediately before today's Gospel reading when St. Matthew recalls the encounter of Jesus with the rich young man. Jesus invited him to give his possessions to the poor and follow Him — in essence, inviting this young man to imitate His generosity. In doing so, He was inviting Him to receive the great gift of His generosity in the form of "treasure in heaven." This is a wonderful example of how Jesus often turns our expectations upside down. As St. Francis said, "it is in giving that we receive." And so we are called to imitate our Lord's generosity.

There are many ways, both seen and unseen, that the parishioners of Sacred Heart embrace this call to generosity. Today we honor those who give of themselves so generously as catechists. The theme for this year's Catechetical Sunday is: ***"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... to bring good news to the poor" (Lk 4:18; cf. Is 61:1).*** We live in a world where our faith is often mocked and belittled. This poverty of belief leads to a loss of hope that is very evident today. Venerable Bishop Fulton Sheen, who will be beatified later this week, noted that many criticisms of Catholicism stem from a misunderstanding of the faith. Catechists provide vital formation to help Catholics truly understand their faith and be equipped to better explain their faith to others who are thirsting for the peace and joy that only Christ can provide. We are blessed to have wonderful catechists in our community. Thank you to all who give of themselves through this ministry.

Ultimately, God owes us nothing. All we have is a gift from the Almighty who gives us what we need, when we need it. Our Lord is the most generous of givers. May we all imitate His love and, in doing so, enter more deeply into His love which is worth more than all the treasure of the world.

In Christ,
Eddie

