

## THE WORD

Year A • Season Colour: Green • Psalter week 1



LAST IN,  
FIRST OUT!

Matthew gives another parable about the Lord, this time about the divine generosity. It is about how the Lord responds to people's needs, not to any supposed merit on their part.

Perhaps we should note first of all the situation of many workers at the time of Jesus (and that the same applies today in many parts of the world). It is one of what we would call *casual labour*: the workers are not employed on a contract, they have no guarantee of work (and therefore of payment) from one day to the next. Those able to work gather at an appointed place first thing in the morning and the foreman comes to select those whom he deems most fit for the task in hand. The rest have to wait until another employer's official comes and does the same, hoping that they will be able to earn enough to feed their families that day. The men in the parable are not loafing around because they cannot be bothered working, but as the final group answer the landowner, *No-one has hired us*. They are able and willing, but have not been given a chance.

We might well have a sneaking sympathy for the workers who have been in the vineyard for twelve hours and borne the heat of the day. It hardly seems fair that the last arrivals should be given the same wages as they are awarded. But the landowner appreciates that the needs of those hired at the eleventh hour are just as great as those given work in the early morning. The parable is an illustration of the gospel teaching that *the last shall be first*. The landowner is fair in his dealings with the original group, he gives them the sum on which they agreed, which shows God's justice. By awarding the workers hired at the end of the day the same amount, Matthew demonstrates God's mercy.

The balance between justice and mercy is not always easy to strike. When the first group complain about their treatment, the landowner asks *Is your eye evil because I am good?* The image of the evil eye suggests a lack of generosity. ■

## REFLECT

Underlying the parable is the theme of the Last Judgment. There is also the tension throughout the gospel narratives between the religiously correct people and Jesus who associates with those who are regarded as beyond the pale, usually referred to as *tax collectors and sinners*, but who gather round Jesus to hear his message. In our own Christian communities today we can find an attitude that those who have kept the rules all their lives should somehow be given a greater reward than those who have come to the Church later in life. On a human level, this is understandable: but God is beyond our comprehension. This is not a way of avoiding the question: it is simply a well-accepted theological fact. It may well be that, in the end, it is better for us to rely on God being generous and merciful than on God acting by strict justice. ■

## LEARN

The expression the kingdom of heaven is sometimes Matthew's way of avoiding using the Lord's name, a custom which the Jews believe shows respect for the sacred Name.

The parable, commonly known as The Workers in the Vineyard, could perhaps be more aptly called The Good Employer.

The workers were not lazy or idle: they were willing to work, but depended on someone hiring them for the day.

The kingdom also means God's gift to give: we must not begrudge God's generosity.

## DO

Think for a little about your attitude to the unemployed. Do you share the striver/shirker way of looking at people in and out of work? Is there any way in which you could help someone to acquire a skill or opportunity which would help them find work?



## SAY

The Lord is just in all his ways  
and loving in all his deeds.

# PARISH OF DROMORE

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## Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017

### Sunday Mass Times

**St Colman's Dromore**                      **All Saints Ballela**  
Sunday 11.00am                              Sunday 9.45am

### Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

**Mon, Wed, & Fri:** 9.30am: Liturgy of the Word  
with Eucharist

**Tues & Thur:** 9.30am Mass

**Sat: 10-11am:** Exposition of The Blessed sacrament

### Ballela Anniversaries

**Sun 24:** Sr Bronagh Meehan  
Mabel Cunningham

**Sun 1:** Daniel & Margaret Devlin, Knockgorm  
Joe McCusker  
Frank Magee

### Dromore Anniversaries

**Sun 24:** Rosalind Rooney  
Rose, Dan & Lissie Brennan  
Robert Guy & deceased members of  
The Kelly & Brennan Family  
Vincent Mallon

**Sun 1:** Arthur McCann  
Isabel McEvoy  
Hugh Downey

**Offertory Promise Collection** £996.90

### Readers - Dromore

**Sun 1:** Claire Downey

### National Novena DROMANTINE

In honour of St Therese of the Child Jesus 2017  
Mass and Novena prayers twice daily  
at 10.00am & 7.30pm from

Saturday 23rd September – Sunday 1st October

**Do This In Memory** A meeting for the parents  
of children in the parish who will make their First  
Holy Communion in 2018 will be held in the  
Parochial House Dromore on Tues 26<sup>th</sup> sept at  
7.30pm. This meeting is for parents, children do  
not need to attend.

### NI Blood Transfusion Service

The next Blood donation session will be held in  
Cathedral Church Hall, Dromore on Wed 27<sup>th</sup> Sept  
2pm-4pm & 5.15pm-8pm

### Parish Draw Winners Week 22

£100	Jasmine Pescod	357
£50	John Mulgrew	153
£30	Kevin Mallon	478
£20	Pat Maginess	225

### Ballela GAC Lotto

**Lotto Numbers:** 5 15 18 21

£10 winner: Paddy McAleenan

Seller's Draw: Sean Burns. Next week's Jackpot £980

### Ballela GAC Presents "A Night at the Races"

on Fri 29<sup>th</sup> Sept at 8.30pm in The Anglers Rest. Entry  
ticket £10 (Includes hot meal) can be bought in  
advance. Contact Gary 07709814562 or any  
committee member for sponsorship. Proceeds in aid  
of "Ball Wall Development"

### An Adult Safeguarding Training session

Has been organised in Newry Parish Centre on  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October from 10:00am - 1pm. This  
training is specifically for Eucharistic Ministers to the  
Housebound. There are 25 places available and more  
training will be offered later in the year. To book a  
place leave your Name, address and telephone  
number with your Parish Priest / Secretary.

### Adoption

Family Care Adoption Services is presently seeking to  
recruit adoptive families for babies and young  
children. For a free information pack please contact  
Tel: 02871368592/02890691133 Mon – Fri, 9-5pm.  
Email: [anne.ohagan@familycaresociety.org](mailto:anne.ohagan@familycaresociety.org)

### Anam Cara

The organisation that supports bereaved parents, is  
holding a Bereavement Information Evening on  
Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 7:30pm in the Armagh  
City Hotel, 2 Friary Road, Armagh, BT60 4FR. This is a  
free event and open to all bereaved parents. As Anam  
Cara will need to confirm numbers for teas, coffees,  
etc, please RSVP to [info@anamcara.ie](mailto:info@anamcara.ie) before Tuesday  
26<sup>th</sup> September or call the Information Line  
Tel: 085 2888 888.