

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Comparison can creep into family recovery in ways we do not always recognize. We hear that someone else's loved one has embraced recovery and begun rebuilding trust, and we wonder why our own situation still feels stuck. We may be grateful for their progress and still feel a quiet ache underneath it. Nothing has been taken from us, yet someone else's good news can make our own waiting feel heavier.

Sunday's gospel speaks directly to that tension through the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16). A landowner goes out throughout the day and invites people to work. Some begin early. Others come much later. At the end, each receives the same wage. The workers who arrived first are not cheated, but they become resentful when they compare what they received with what was given to those who came later.

The landowner asks, *“Are you envious because I am generous?”* (Matthew 20:15). For family members and friends, that question can touch a tender place. We may compare our loved one's willingness with someone else's or wonder why another family seems to be healing faster than ours. Comparison can turn someone else's grace into evidence that God has forgotten us.

The first reading reminds us, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord”* (Isaiah 55:8). We see only part of the story. We do not know what God is doing in another person's heart, and we cannot force His timing in someone we love. Family recovery asks us to stop measuring our peace by another person's progress and to receive the grace God is offering us today.

That grace may not look like the outcome we hoped for. It may be the courage to keep a boundary or the clarity to stop rescuing. Sometimes God's generosity appears first in our own healing rather than in the change we are praying to see in someone else.

This does not mean we stop hoping for our loved one. We can pray, participate in our own recovery, and respond when genuine change occurs. But hope becomes healthier when it is no longer tied to comparison or control. We do not have to decide that another family's good news means there is less mercy available for ours.

The workers who arrived late also offer hope. No one is beyond God's invitation. A loved one may resist help for years and become willing later. A relationship that seems beyond repair may still surprise us. We cannot demand that these things happen, but neither do we need to conclude that God has stopped going out into the marketplace.

Saint Paul writes in the second reading, *“For to me life is Christ”* (Philippians 1:21). Family recovery slowly teaches us that Christ must become the center of our own lives, not another person's sobriety, choices, or timeline. Our peace becomes more stable when it rests in Him. Gratitude helps us notice this shift. We begin to recognize growth that would have escaped us before: a calmer response, a clearer boundary, a day no longer consumed by fear. These are real gifts, even when the larger situation remains unresolved.

God's generosity toward another family does not diminish His care for ours. We can celebrate another person's

breakthrough without turning it into a judgment on our own story. Our task is to receive the grace in front of us, remain faithful to the work that belongs to us, and trust that God is still at work where we cannot see.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Where has comparison with another person or family made your own situation feel more discouraging?

- What grace might God already be giving you, even if your loved one's circumstances have not changed in the way you hoped?

- How can you remain hopeful for someone you love without making your peace dependent on their progress?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Isaiah 55:6–9

RESP. PS. Psalm 145:2–3, 8–9, 17–18

SECOND READING Philippians 1:20c–24, 27a

GOSPEL Matthew 20:1–16a