

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Aug 20th 2014

Today's feast is in honor of St. Bernard who is termed the "Doctor of the Church". St. Bernard's life, in part, helped to re-emphasize Lectio Divina (Latin for divine reading). This was the understanding that Holy Scriptures should not be treated as just texts to be studied but as the Living Word. The tradition of Lectio Divina has four steps: read, meditate, pray and contemplate.

Today's Gospel reading certainly warrants these four steps. How challenging it is to understand the mind and thoughts of God! On the surface, the landowner simply was not fair in paying the workers who worked all day the same as those who only worked an hour. Through the lens that we see the world, the landowner's generosity was not representing just treatment to the workers who labored longer. Our competitive socialization makes it hard to accept "the last shall be first, and the first will be last" in this context.

God's love and gifts are personalized just for us. We are accepted, loved and blessed individually. We are moved and called by the spirit individually. We should not compare and view as competition the position, gifts and blessings of our fellow pilgrims for we cannot fathom the insights of God, nor do we fully know the depths of the needs of our brothers and sisters. It is difficult but, in faith, we must focus on our own acceptance by God.

And when doubt creeps in because of the pressures of the world recall Psalm 23:1 "The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want." Amen!

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