### LSW

children

heaven or we don’t. And everyone who does, gets to the same heaven.

*There are people who committed their lives to living in a community, like nuns and some priests. Those who are able work more. Those who can’t work as much as they can. Those who are able draw little from the common funds. Those who are sick draw as much as they need. Maybe, the kingdom of God is a little like that. People contribute as much as they can and takes as much as they need: everyone gets the same chance of life.*

Year A

###### Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Images**

God’s gifts are unlimited

**Points to note**

This is a long parable reading and deals with concepts of ‘unfairness’ with which adults often struggle. Children encounter these similar concepts of ‘unfairness’ in what we see as their own little childish ways. Or is it we, adults, who react to such ‘unfairness’ in childish ways. In this sense, to discuss this with children could be difficult unless the facilitator has, at least to a certain extent, come to terms with this ‘unfairness’. Care should also be taken that we do not project our prejudices on the children.

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in the heaven and glory in the highest heavens!

Alleluia!

Gospel

*Jesus has explained forgiveness to his disciples and he expects everybody to forgive everyone.*

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Matthew

*All:*  Glory to you O Lord

(Mt 20: 1-16)

Jesus said to his disciples, “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at sunrise to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with his workers for RM30, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about 9 o’clock he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, “You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage.” So they went. At about noon and again at about 3 o’clock, he went out and did the same. Then at about the 5 o’clock he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, “Why have you been standing here idle all day?” “Because no one has hired us,” they answered. He said to them, “You go off into my vineyard too”. In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his accountant, “Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first.” So those who were hired at about the 5 o’clock came forward and received $30 each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received $30 each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. “The men who came last,” they said, “have done only one hour’s work, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day’s work in al the heat.” He answered one of them and said, “My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on $30? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be jealous because I am generous?” Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.

This is the Word of the Lord

**Dialogue**

Describe the scenario: the child was caught fighting with the little brother or sister. Mom comes along and had a severe punishment for the child, but little brother or sister got off without even a telling off. Do they feel it is fair? Get them to describe any other situations like this. Be careful that the whole session does not get too vindictive!

Ever played a game, like football, with the rest of the team? Or on sports day? (You may use any other team activity such as putting together a collage with others, etc.) Imagine that the child played very hard and ran a lot during the game or race. Some others did not do so much work. But because it is a team effort, everyone gets a prize irrespective of the effort put in. How does the child feel about it? Is it fair? Encourage different points of view.

Ask the child to imagine him or herself as the one who was less skilled or talented and yet got the same prize as others. How would this child feel? Is it fair for such a child to feel like that?

*Go thorough the story again and see what workmen felt, those who worked all day and those who worked only one hour.*

* What do you think those who worked one hour thought they will get when time came for them to be paid? Do you think they expected a full day’s pay? How do you think they felt when they got a full day’s pay?
* What do you think those who worked all day thought when they saw those who worked one hour get a full day’s pay? Do you think they thought they will get more than those who worked one hour? Why? How do you think they felt when they got exactly the same?
* How do you think those who worked one hour and got a full day’s pay felt when they saw those who worked all day getting the same as them?

Relate it to the message of Jesus. All people who are saved belong to the one big happy family of God. And all members of the same family will enjoy the same rewards from the same father, just as all members of the same team get the same prize. There is only one reward: going to heaven. There is no such thing as a lower grade of heaven. Either we make it to