

**20th SEPTEMBER 2026
25th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

REFLECTION

Whenever we hear the parable in today's Gospel, there maybe part of us that sympathizes with the labourers hired early in the day, who complained about their wage. There seems something unfair about their predicament. The passage challenges us in such a way that we can easily recall the words of Isaiah when God says, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways." The parable is not intended to be a paradigm for the Catholic understanding of labour relations or just wage. The wage structure model used in the passage would never pass muster in a business school. Rather, the parable's description of the landowner in the Gospel connotes that he is not strictly a landowner- he is a metaphor for how God the Father loves us.

On one level, the parable can be understood as an allegory for salvation history, it unfolds in this way. The House of Israel is often compared to the vine of God, who planted and watered it, preparing the Israelites to bear fruits of righteousness (Is. 5:7; 27:2-5). To its shame, Israel failed to yield good fruits and the Lord allowed His vineyard, Israel's kingdom, to be overrun by conquerors (Ps. 80:9-20). But God promised that one day He would replant His vineyard and its shoots would blossom to the ends of the earth (Amos 9:15; Hosea 14: 5-10).

The landowner is God. The vineyard is the kingdom.

The workers hired at dawn are the Israelites, to whom He first offered His covenant. Those hired later in the day are the Gentiles, the non Israelites, who, until the coming of Christ, were strangers to the covenants of promise (Ephesians 2:11-13). In the Lord's great generosity, the same wages, the same blessings promised to the first-called, the Israelites, will be apportioned to those called last, the rest of the nations. Like the Gentiles, many will be allowed to enter the kingdom late - after having spent most of their days idling in sin. But even these can call upon Him and find Him near, as we sing in today's psalm. We should rejoice that God has compassion on all whom He has created. This should console us, too, especially if we have loved ones who remain far from the vineyard. Our task is to continue labouring in His vineyard.

Understood on a more personal level, it is also the story of those who come to conversion later and those who have remained in the household of Faith all their lives. This dynamic has overtones of the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Recall the resentment that the older son has when the prodigal son returns. His grumbling and the grumbling of those hired early in the day are more similar than they are different.

This dynamic may lead us to Ask why we would want to be holy in this life, when it is possible for "late converts" to enter into heavenly glory. There are at least two reasons: first, it is always better to remain in the Father's vineyard. Wandering off the vineyard is a perilous venture. We don't know if we will have time or the opportunity or the grace of reversion. Presuming one's salvation can be among the most dangerous spiritual maladies - and one we should avoid. Second, St Thomas Aquinas reminds us that the quality of our heavenly experience will be proportionate to the holiness of our lives here on earth. There is good reason to seek holiness now, as opposed to delaying. Let us pray for the grace to relish the privilege given us to work for such a generous Master. Extracts from writings of Fr. Jerome Magat

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME 2026/7

The programme will start again on the 1st November 2026. Parents are asked to book an interview before the classes start. Interview times ARE AVAILABLE NOW AND WILL CLOSE ON 10TH OCTOBER. Don't delay and miss out! email the parish office NOW office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz to make an appointment time.

There will also be compulsory parent-only sessions before each of the classes begin. The dates will be shared with the parents during the interview. The cost of the programme is \$50, this covers the cost of the resources, the books, and the party. We will also need to sight the children's baptismal certificates, please have them, and your donation available for the interview or the parent-only sessions in October.

BAPTISM PREPARATION

We have two more Infant Baptism Preparation Courses scheduled for this year, one in October and one in November. Courses are compulsory if you have not taken a course previously. So if you have an infant for baptism or if you are expecting a baby (a good time to do the course before baby arrives). Please contact us to register office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz or phone 480 7357. The Course consists of two 1 1/2hr sessions from 7 to 8.30pm on consecutive evenings and is held here in the Foley Centre.

PILGRIMAGE FROM FATIMA TO THE VATICAN (23 DAYS)

Departs 11th April 2027 Home 3rd May 2027. Chaplain Msgr. David Tonks. For more details contact email: Laura.yap@travelmanagers.co.nz phone: 021 390 055

NURTURE OUR FAITH' 2026

Next Faith Nurturing monthly evening Gathering is on Monday 28th September, 7-8.30pm, in the Foley Centre. This is an opportunity to reflect, nourish, and strengthen our Faith by delving deeper into the meaning of what we believe. The topic that we will explore is "The Catholic Sacraments: Encounters with the Divine" ALL WELCOME! To register, please email office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz.

"PHISHING" SCAM EMAILS

If you receive an email, supposedly from a priest, please check carefully prior to opening and, if in doubt, do not open or reply to but contact the parish office office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz Lots of scam emails going around BEWARE

JOSHUA CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Meeting Wednesday 23 September 7pm fellowship, 7.30pm meeting. St Mark's Church 334 Pakuranga Road. Special Speaker from the USA Fr Shenan Bouquet President Human Life International, in conjunction with Family Life International NZ. Fr Bouquet will give a talk on *Men's Vocation to Purity and Love*. All men Welcome! More info. Contact Tet-Woo 021 038 0196 or Chris 027 568 7736

DAYLIGHT SAVING 2026

Please remember to put your clocks forward 1 hour next Saturday, before you go to bed, as we spring forward to summer! Don't be later for 8.30am Mass!

INVITATION

You are cordially invited to a Thursday evening Scripture Reflective Study Series *The Bible and The Sacraments* Start date to be advised when at least two people register. (Free sessions!) 6.30 to 7.30pm on the 4th Thursday of the month, venue Foley Centre at St Mary's Parish. register by emailing office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz or texting 'attending' to Rose on 022 580 7851

PRAYER RETREAT FOR WOMEN

9th Oct. 6pm to 11 Oct. 3pm "Prayer & the Interior Life" please register at: www.stfrancisretreatcentre.org.nz

CHILDREN'S FORMATION

If your child has been baptised, attends a non-Catholic school and would like to know more about their faith, these classes provide an opportunity for them to learn the faith. **The classes are a requirement for those children wishing to register for the Sacramental Programme later this year.** Classes are on a Sunday morning. Enq. Childrenformation@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

ON GOING REQUEST FOR FOOD/CARE PRODUCTS FOR DE PAUL HOUSE!

First a BIG Thank You to those who regularly bring something along every weekend - everything helps!

De Paul House needs an ongoing supply of food and especially personal and household care products. Shampoo, soap, hand-wash, deodorant, dish wash, clothes wash, etc. Basics like crackers, biscuits, pasta sauce, tinned fish & meat, coconut milk & cream, jam, vegemite, milk powder, long life milk. Every contribution makes a difference. If you want to run a food drive, contact Lesley Farmer.lesley@depaulhouse.org.nz

CAN YOU HELP DE PAUL HOUSE?

You can get some good bargains at The Warehouse or Briscoes! De Paul House needs your help to restock their warm bedding and towel banks. You will be helping homeless and low-income families and senior citizens stay warm this winter. De Paul House has had a huge increase in calls for help both with housing and support services. Please share the message with friends, family and work colleagues. Matthew 25:40 The King will reply "Truly I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." admin@depaulhouse.org.nz ph: 480 5959



ST MARY'S NORTH COTE PARISH AUCKLAND

To register, Pledge for your Planned Giving, get our newsletter online, or update your address and contact details: Please go to our Web site!

Don't hesitate to contact the office if you need help!
office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

ST MARY'S KNIGHTS

Our next St Mary's Knights gathering is Friday 25th September! This youth group for children aged 8-12 runs every 4th Friday of the month from 6-8 pm in the church hall. There we discuss scripture, learn about significant people in the church and in the bible as well as focus on key events in the liturgical calendar. Please bring a plate of snacks (fruit or baking) to share if possible RSVP to Frankie 022 059 0852.

MASS INTENTIONS

Sat. 9.15am Maria Ornelas RIP, **Sun. 8.30am** Angelle Batta RIP; **Sun. 10.30am** Ena & Doug Martin RIP, and Evelyn Gough RIP (1st Anniv.)

LONG TERM VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AUSTRALIA-PACIFIC REGION - THE CAGLIERO PROJECT, SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO

We are seeking long term (6-12 month) volunteers for departure in January 2027 to work with young people in our Salesian communities in Samoa, Cambodia, Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and Mongolia.

Applications close October 31st, 2026. Send us an enquiry - www.cagliero.org.au or lhichaaba@salesians.org.au.

LET'S GET TOGETHER! AN EVENING TO SUPPORT THE BEACHHAVEN YOUNG ADULTS GROUP.

A 2 course meal, BYP drinks on Friday 30 October at Rate Payers, 336 Rangitira Road, Beachhaven. Doors open at 5.00pm formalities commence 6.00pm. Cost \$50 per person. There will be music, performances and more! Payments to Maria Assumpta account 02-0108-0708609-002 pay by 16 Oct. more info. Lolesio 021 0844 9900 or Christiana 022 646 9689

INVITATION FROM HOLY CROSS SEMINARY, PONSONBY.

Invite you to join their celebration of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Bishop Richard Laurenson will be the principal celebrant. Mass celebrated at 7pm on Monday 21 Sept. at Sacred Heart Church, Ponsonby. Light refreshments will be served at Holy Cross Seminary after the Mass. Everyone most welcome!

HOPE FOR THE WORLD

International Conference on Life, Faith & Family - Friday 25 to Sunday 27 September. In Christ we can restore a culture where every life is protected from conception to natural death and where marriage and family are again seen as truly good for healthy, flourishing, individuals and society. More info and register go to <https://fli.org.nz/prolifeconference2026/> or use the QR Code enquiries to Simon Archer 021 400 72 simona@fli.org.nz

Please pray: For the elderly and frail & the sick in our parish, especially, Philip, Yohann, Linda F, John McC, Megan S, Peter D, Peter C, John W, Mary L. Shannon, Owen B, Susan C, Serge, Katya, S Perry, Kathy M, Matthew S, Ronald B, Syrel C, Billy G, M. Angus C, Keira, Max W, David P, Yvonne S, Lauren S, Fe T, Jamie S-W, Adam S, James F, Lu P, Caroline C, Emily D, Sebastian C, Lucia, Anselmo S, Victoria R, Hilda P, David K, Alice C, Najla, Petros A, Jocell D -V, Luca M, Maselino L, Ann C, Yvonne P, Helen McBride, Aesop N, Patricia W, Elizabeth S, M O'S, Jason P, Maria & Andre T, Emily G, June B, John R, Patricia M, Cath S, Anne J, Patrick C, Cath S, Mike L, Aria J, Neil M, Ray & Noelene O, Sue M, Celine S, Kathleen F, Dorothy & Francis, Mary G

DAILY READINGS

Monday St Matthew				
Reading	Ephesians	4: 1- 7,11-13	Ps.	19A
Gospel	Matthew	9: 9-13		
Tuesday				
Reading	Proverbs	21: 1- 6,10-13	Ps.	119H
Gospel	Luke	8:19-21		
Wednesday St Pius of Pietrelcina				
Reading	Proverbs	30: 5- 9	Ps.	119H
Gospel	Luke	9: 1- 6		
Thursday Our Lady of Mercy				
Reading	Eccles.	1: 2-11	Ps.	90
Gospel	Luke	9: 7- 9		
Friday				
Reading	Eccles.	3: 1-11	Ps.	144
Gospel	Luke	9:18-22		
Saturday				
Reading	Ecclesiasticus	11: 9-12: 8	Ps.	90
Gospel	Luke	9:43-45		
26th SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME				
1st Reading	Ezekiel	18:25-28	Ps.	25
2nd Reading	Philippians	2: 1-11		
Gospel	Matthew	21:28-32		

NOTICES FROM THE DIOCESE

Local Youth Ministers Wanted! The Catholic Diocese of Auckland is looking for self-motivated relationship-builders to become part-time local Youth Ministers, working in a secondary school and/or parish. This is a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of young people! To learn more and to apply, please visit: www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/staff-vacancies/
Catherine McAuley Symposium Join leading thinkers from the UK, USA and Aotearoa at the Catherine McAuley Symposium in Wellington, 13-15 December. Explore what it means to be a faith-based organisation in a changing global environment. Quality speakers exploring leadership, identity, mission and the challenges facing religious organisations today. Earlybird registrations close 24 September. CatherineMcAuleySymposium-Whanau Mercy Ministries

Mission Sunday 100th Celebration on Sunday 18th October a day set aside to pray for the Church's mission and support those who carry the Gospel. Support can be financial & through prayer Bishop's Letter on noticeboard.

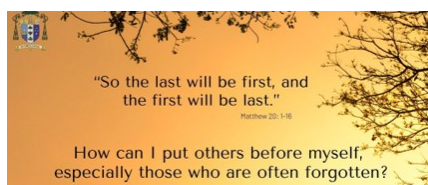
Special Collection in the Auckland Diocese - friendly reminder SUNDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER. This money is used to support long-term maintenance of our Mother Church, the Cathedral of St Patrick's & St Joseph - a precious Heritage entrusted to us. (Direct Credit to 02-0108-0722777-00 St Patrick's Cathedral Heritage Foundation Account).

Caritas Housing Election Forum - 23 September Realising the right to a decent home. This forum will be co-hosted by Archbishop Paul Martin and Archbishop Justin Duckworth bring together Church, community and political voices to discuss homelessness, affordable housing and long-term solutions. 6.30pm Wed. 23rd September, live stream available <https://www.caritas.org.nz/housingforum>.

The Square Gift Shop With grateful hearts and trust in God's providence, we are delighted to announce that the Square Gift Shop has now moved to a new location. Suite 2, level 1, 9 Teed Street Newmarket. We look forward to welcoming everyone to our new home.

St Patrick's Cathedral Office Clear Out There is a range of office furniture, household items, religious items and Christmas decorations, ++ There might be a hidden gem at a good price just for you! Sunday 4 October 10am to 6pm, Liston Building directly opposite St Patrick's Cathedral. Carpark options Hobson Street (Old Farmers) \$4.50 via the ParkMate App only. Premo code STPATS to receive discount or Durham Lane (City Centre) \$3 validate physical ticket in the parking machine located by the noticeboard.

Youth Leader Hui Sat 3 October 10am-2.30pm at Pompallier Diocesan Centre. A day for youth leaders, share and shape the future of youth ministry in our Diocese. We want to hear your hopes, insights and ideas as we look ahead together! We're all in the same waka! Come ready to share, to learn and be inspired alongside others who share your passion for seeing young people encounter Jesus. *Free barista coffee on arrival, lunch will be provided.* To register <https://events.humanitix.com/youth-leaders-hui-2026>



"So the last will be first, and the first will be last" Matthew 20: 1-16

How can I put others before myself, especially those who are often forgotten?

CHURCH CLEANING

26 Sept. Kimberly G
03 Oct. Nissa T
ALTAR LINEN
20 Sept. Ninette C
27 Sept. Birgitte R

PROLIFE FACTS

The United States Catholic Bishops' Conference has launched a nationwide campaign urging pharmacies to stop supplying medical abortion pills used in the first ten weeks of pregnancy. Ken Orr of Right to Life is calling on New Zealand churches to adopt a similar initiative. The American campaign combines prayer, online advocacy tools that let Christians email pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies, and community education on Church teaching and the health risks of Early Medical Abortion (EMA). According to the Ministry of Health, 550 New Zealand pharmacies now dispense EMA. With pharmacy involvement expanding, and provisional statistic indicating that 11,871 preborn babies in were aborted in 2025 using EMA, Right to Life argues that New Zealand churches should urgently implement a comparable campaign. **For pro-life info, visit righttolife.org.nz**