

# WEEK 19: THE FIRST AND THE LAST

## HIGH SCHOOL

### GOALS

Who is the landowner and laborers in the parable?  
What is the vineyard in the parable?

### LESSON

**Materials Needed:** Bible, Paper, Pencils

**Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:**

*The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church* by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pgs 261-271

*The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Matthew* by Blessed Theophylact, pgs 169-174

### THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Read Matthew 20:1-16

#### VOCABULARY:

- Denarius: money - a soldier or unskilled laborer would be paid one denarius for a day's worth of work during Jesus' time
- Early morning: 6 am - sun rising (also known as 1st hour)
- 3rd hour: 9 am
- 6th hour: 12 pm
- 9th hour: 3 pm
- 11th hour: 5 pm (last chance to get anything done before the sun sets)

Do we still use this terminology today in relation to the time of day? Yes, for our daily cycle of prayers and also during Holy Week when we are reading about the crucifixion of Christ. We will discuss the significance of the times within this parable as we move further through the lesson.

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*Teacher Instruction: As the teacher is reading the verses for this lesson, ask the students to listen carefully and sketch what is happening in the parable on a piece of paper as the teacher is reading. This is note taking in picture form, so this is not something that will take a lot of time. Just as we write the main points or abbreviate when we're writing notes in class, the same is true when taking sketch notes. In order to draw the main points of the parable, the child has to: listen to the parable and then decide what are the most important parts to draw.*

Jesus begins this parable with, "For the kingdom of heaven is like..." He is teaching us about the kingdom of heaven. The landowner is the most important person in this story. With this in mind, who do you think the landowner is in this parable? (Christ - He is the master of the land, that is, the Church)

The landowner goes out early in the morning to hire people to work in his vineyard. St. Theophylact explains that the laborers are each of us and we are called to labor and work in the vineyard, which is our soul.

Someone who works in a vineyard will do their best to remove weeds around grapevines. They will also prune off the dead or non-fruiting branches of the vine. Likewise, we are called to get rid of all the things that don't produce fruit in our lives or threaten to choke out God. We oftentimes refer to these things as passions because we tend to obsess about them more than we think about God.

What do you think the time of day is referring to in this parable as the landowner hires laborers? Hint: Think about the Sermon of St. John Chrysostom we hear every year at Pascha:

*If anyone has labored from the first hour, let him today receive his just reward. If anyone has come at the third hour, with thanksgiving let him keep the feast. If anyone has arrived at the sixth hour, let him have no misgivings; for he shall suffer no loss. If anyone has delayed until the ninth hour, let him draw near without hesitation. If anyone has arrived even at the eleventh hour, let him not fear on account of his delay.*

St. Theophylact goes on to explain that the times in the parable can be in reference to our age when we begin laboring against the passions. For some, we are baptized when we are babies. (Early morning) For others, when we are children. (3rd hour) For still others, not

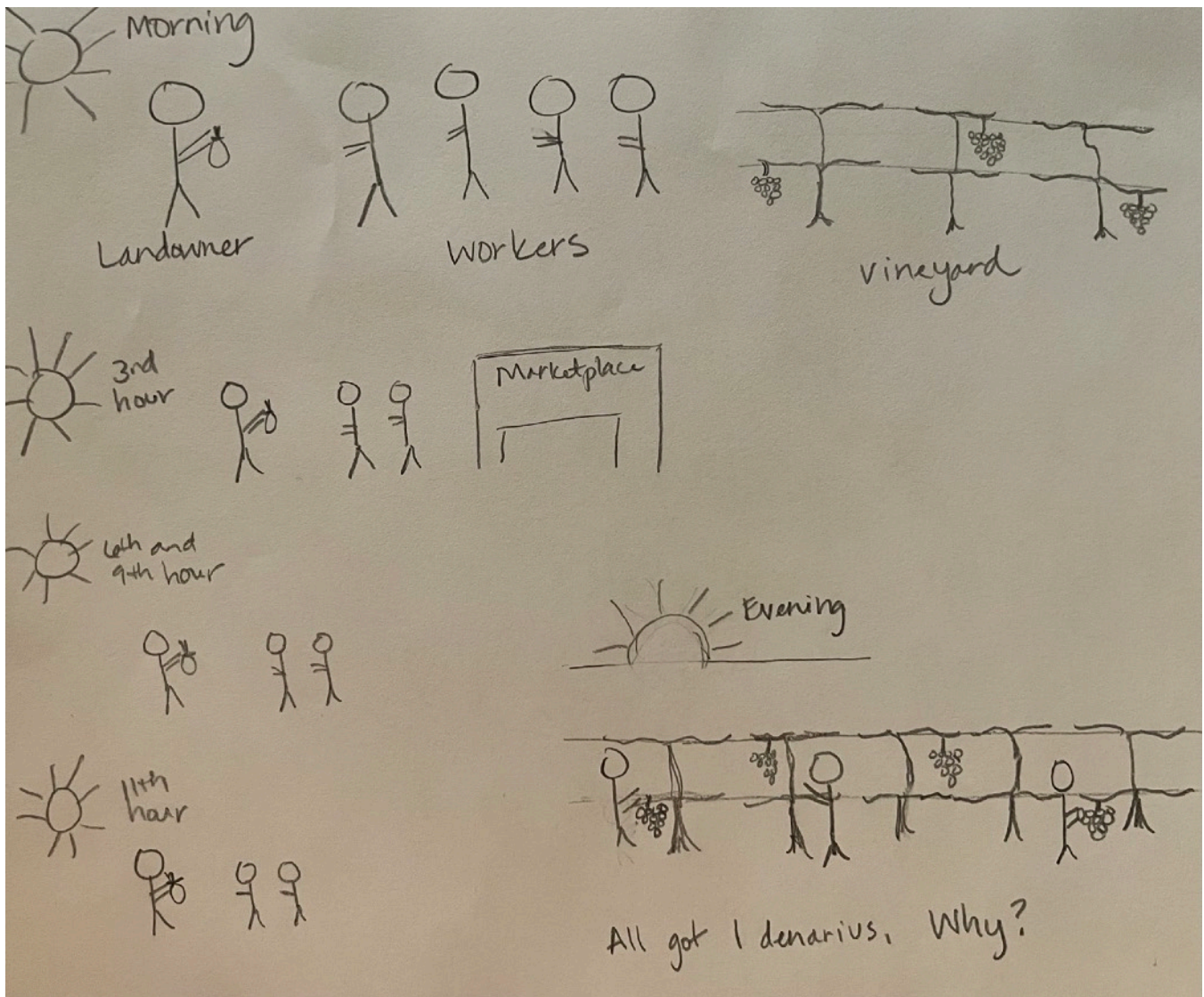
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until we are adults. (6th and 9th hour) When we refer to doing something at the 11th hour, this means we waited until the last possible moment to start working on it. In this case, when we are elderly.

Evening in this parable refers to the end of the world and we learn that just as the saints are all deemed worthy of the one gift (the denarius) of the Holy Spirit, those who repent even in their eleventh hour of life can receive this same gift of the Holy Spirit. God loves us so dearly that when we repent and turn back to Him, He welcomes us with open arms - just as the Father to his prodigal son.

# AN EXAMPLE OF SKETCHING NOTES

while listening to the parable





# PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD



# WEEK 19: THE FIRST AND THE LAST

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

### GOALS

Who is the landowner and laborers in the parable?  
What is the vineyard in the parable?

### LESSON

**Materials Needed:** Bible

**Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:**

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### THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Read Matthew 20:1-16

#### VOCABULARY:

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Do we still use this terminology today in relation to the time of day? Yes, for our daily cycle of prayers and also during Holy Week when we are reading about the crucifixion of Christ. We will discuss the significance of the times within this parable as we move further through the lesson.

Jesus begins this parable with, "For the kingdom of heaven is like..." He is teaching us about the kingdom of heaven. The landowner is the most important person in this story.

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With this in mind, who do you think the landowner is in this parable? (Christ - He is the master of the land, that is, the Church)

The landowner goes out early in the morning to hire people to work in his vineyard. St. Theophylact explains that the laborers are each of us and we are called to labor and work in the vineyard, which is our soul.

Someone who works in a vineyard will do their best to remove weeds around grapevines. They will also prune off the dead or non-fruiting branches of the vine. Likewise, we are called to get rid of all the things that don't produce fruit in our lives or threaten to choke out God. We oftentimes refer to these things as passions because we tend to obsess about them more than we think about God.

What do you think the time of day is referring to in this parable as the landowner hires laborers? Hint: Think about the Sermon of St. John Chrysostom we hear every year at Pascha:

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St. Theophylact goes on to explain that the times in the parable can be in reference to our age when we begin laboring against the passions. For some, we are baptized when we are babies. (Early morning) For others, when we are children. (3rd hour) For still others, not until we are adults. (6th and 9th hour) When we refer to doing something at the 11th hour, this means we waited until the last possible moment to start working on it. In this case, when we are elderly.

Evening in this parable refers to the end of the world. We all have the opportunity to enter the kingdom of heaven, regardless of how old we were when we went to confession for the first time. God always wants to welcome us with open arms when we have a change of heart and come back to Him - just like the Parable of the Prodigal Son, when the Father welcomes his son back.



# PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD





## WEEK 19: THE FIRST AND THE LAST

3RD & 4TH GRADE

### GOALS

Who is the landowner and laborers in the parable?  
What is the vineyard in the parable?

### LESSON

**Materials Needed:** Bible, White Board, Dry Erase Markers

**Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:**

*The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church* by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pgs 261-271

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### THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Matthew 20:1-16

#### VOCABULARY:

- Landowner: someone who owns the land (Do your parents rent your home or own it?)
- Laborers: people who do physical work
- Vineyard: where grapes grow
- Denarius: money - a soldier or unskilled laborer would be paid one denarius for a day's worth of work during Jesus' time
- Early morning: 6 am - sun rising (also known as 1st hour)
- 3rd hour: 9 am
- 6th hour: 12 pm
- 9th hour: 3 pm
- 11th hour: 5 pm (last chance to get anything done before the sun sets)
- Wages: your payment for working

*Teacher Note: Go over the vocabulary words before reading the parable to the children. If they do not understand any of these terms, it will be difficult for them to understand (and remember) the story.*

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READ Matthew 20:1-16

There is a landowner who goes looking for people to hire and work in His vineyard. The landowner in this story is Jesus and He is asking all of us (the laborers) to work at learning the Bible so we can understand how we are supposed to live our lives. We've learned in many of our gospel lessons that we are to be loving and merciful towards others. What else have the gospels taught us as far as how we should live our lives?

The vineyard in this story is our soul. How do we take care of our soul? (*We go to confession and ask God to forgive our sins.*)

There were many times listed throughout the day in the parable when the landowner was hiring workers. Do we still say 3rd hour, 6th hour, 9th hour, and 11th hour today or is this something that only Jesus said? Indeed! We still say them today when we are talking about specific times we pray throughout the day. You will also hear these terms for time used during Holy Week when we are reading about the crucifixion of Christ.

There's one more time you will hear these terms in reference to time - at the Divine Liturgy on Pascha! Listen carefully and you will hear Father reading a famous sermon from St. John Chrysostom. This is part of the sermon:

If anyone has labored from the first hour, let him today receive his just reward. If anyone has come at the third hour, with thanksgiving let him keep the feast. If anyone has arrived at the sixth hour, let him have no misgivings; for he shall suffer no loss. If anyone has delayed until the ninth hour, let him draw near without hesitation. If anyone has arrived even at the eleventh hour, let him not fear on account of his delay.

*Teacher Instruction: Ask one or more students to summarize the parable to you. Then ask one or more students to tell you what the parable is asking them to work towards. (Repentance and building a relationship with God through prayer and learning how we should live through the gospels)*

# PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD



## WEEK 19: THE FIRST AND THE LAST

1ST & 2ND GRADE

### GOALS

Who is the landowner and laborers in the parable?  
What is the vineyard in the parable?

### LESSON

**Materials Needed:** Bible

**Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:**

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### CLASS ROUTINE

Continue routine - move photo, light candle, venerate icon, prayer

### THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Read Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus would tell stories called parables in order to teach the people about the kingdom of heaven. In this story, Jesus is the landowner. We are the laborers and who are trying our very best ask for forgiveness when we make a mistake. When we go to confession and ask God to forgive us, our sins are washed away! We also learn from the gospels, directly from Jesus, how we should treat each other and what we need to do to go to heaven.

What are some of the ways we've learned we should treat each other from the gospels?

### LORD, HAVE MERCY

Continue practice singing, "Lord, have mercy" in multiple languages



# PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD



## WEEK 19: THE FIRST AND THE LAST

### PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN

#### GOALS

Who is the landowner and laborers in the parable?  
What is the vineyard in the parable?

#### LESSON

**Materials Needed:** Bible

**Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:**

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#### CLASS ROUTINE

Continue routine - move photo, light candle, venerate icon, prayer

#### THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Summarize Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus would tell stories called parables in order to teach people about the kingdom of heaven. In the parable of the workers in the vineyard, there is a man who is in charge of a bunch of land. He goes out one day to hire some people to work in his vineyard, which is a place where grapes grow. He spends all day asking people to help him pull out weeds and trim the branches on his grapevines. If they help him, he'll give each of them one denarius, which is the money they used then. This landowner had lots of people come and help him in his vineyard and at the end of the day he paid each of them one denarius. But...guess what? The people who worked in his vineyard from the very beginning of the day were jealous of the people who got paid the same amount as them and they started working at the end of the day. Do you think Jesus wants us to be jealous of each other? Of course not! He wants us to share and love one another instead!

#### LORD, HAVE MERCY

Continue practice singing, "Lord, have mercy" in multiple languages



# PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

