

Homily

25 Sunday (A)

24 September 2017

*Standing idle in the market place....* When did you last see a school governor or a teacher *standing idle*?

It's our first Sunday School session today. Can anyone in the First Holy Communion class tell me what the word 'idle' means?

*...go to my vineyard, and I will give you a fair wage.* School governors work extremely hard and have enormous responsibilities and yet they receive no wage whatsoever. They do it all for love, for the good of our children, for the good of this community.

Teachers work extremely hard as well and have even greater responsibilities. They do of course get paid. But I think it is unfair to say that government imposed funding cuts in all our schools are making life increasingly difficult.

Things can sometimes seem so stressful that we can echo the words of St Paul, "*I want to be gone and be with Christ*".

*The last will be first, and the first, last.*

The great witness of Catholic education or of any kind of education worthy of the name, is that it is not about money, not about targets, not about OFSTED and not about academisation. Education is about the generosity of God. *The lord is just in all his ways and loving in all his deeds.... Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near.* This is our reward. This is our joy.

At the offertory we are going to sing The Servant King. This is the style of Christian life and ministry modelled for us by Pope Francis. We all need to be servants – servant governors, servant teachers, servant children, servant Catholics – *not to be served but to serve...* 'to bring our lives as a daily offering', a daily offering to God and to one another.

So, no *standing idle in the market place*. If you are going to stand idle, stand idle here in the house of God and in that moment of idleness experience something of the generosity of God, soak up the fullness of his grace, absorb the power of his love.

*Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near.*

Fr Michael