



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – 25th Sunday of the Year 2017

Today we'll take a look at our first reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah and then we'll take a look at our Gospel reading from St. Matthew. In our first reading God says to us: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways from your ways, and my thoughts from your thoughts." You got that! Ok, a friend of mine tells us this story. One night he went to the movies to see the film called Enough. It's the story about an abused woman played by Jennifer Lopez who, one day retaliated against her ex-husband who was abusing her. She viciously and repeatedly kicked him. My friend tells us that the audience in the theatre applauded. Now, no one should tolerate abuse of any kind; we don't tolerate that – whether it be physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, verbal abuse or any kind of

abuse. But do we fight violence with violence? That's what the people in that movie theatre thought we should do! What do you think? Dear God, please teach us to think the way you think, so we can act the way you act, Amen! Now! Let's take a look at our Gospel. If the owner of the vineyard in our story, symbolizes God, and it clearly DOES symbolize God. Then, is God crazy? I mean, who in his right mind would give a full day's pay to someone who worked only one hour? I'll tell you who! The same God who leaved the ninety-nine sheep and goes after the one who strayed; the same God who diligently searches the whole house looking for one lost coin worth about a penny; the same God who throws a party for his prodigal son, that's who !! The parable is not a story about fairness, nor is it a story about economic justice. The parable is a story about God who is so expansive, so abundant, so generous so loving that maybe we, like the workers in the vineyard can find offense at it. Why? Because, our ways are not his ways! When I was in high school, one of our teachers told us the story about "Dutch" Schultz. Do you know the story of "Dutch" Schultz? Well here's the story as far as I can remember. "Dutch" Schultz was a notorious gangster – a really bad guy. "Dutch" Schultz was a Catholic and as he was dying, his body riddled with bullets, he asked for a priest and he made a deathbed confession. The story of "Dutch" Schultz helped form my image of God. In heaven, there are no levels. In heaven, we're all equal, we're all one. So that means, in heaven "Dutch" Schultz who lived a life of sin is on the same level as our Blessed Mother, who never sinned! That is unfair! That is crazy! That is God! So contradictory to what I was taught for so long: "you get what you pray for and you deserve

your rewards." With God you can't earn, you can't deserve – with God it's all pure gift – it's all grace no matter how long you worked or didn't work. Wow! "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways," says the Lord. "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways from your ways – my thoughts from your thoughts."