

Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time 2020

My beloved brothers and sisters, Jesus teaches this parable in the last week before He dies. He has gone to Jerusalem, and He has prophesied His death and Resurrection to His disciples and Apostles. We can assume; therefore, that Jesus is being very solemn when He challenges the Jewish Leadership for their non-belief, for they have not only failed to listen to Him and believe, despite the incredible displays of Divine Power that He has exercised; but, they have also failed to listen to the prophetic call to repentance of John the Baptist as well!

Jesus has spent His remaining days in the Temple, debating with the Religious leadership of Israel, they have spent their time trying to discredit Him and humiliate Him. But, we fail to realize, that this parable is not only directed to the Jewish leadership. It is directed throughout the history of the Church, to all “religious” people who have made up their minds and fail to listen to the voice of the Spirit speaking to us today, because they are convinced that their way is God’s way.

The elders and chief priests were supposed to be the experts in Torah, the Prophets and Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. They claimed to be God’s closest collaborators, who served God by serving the Temple, by their study, and thereby, they had the right to rule and govern the people according to their well-informed opinions, because they were following God’s commandments better than anyone else. And yet, they are the ones who were so blind that they did not recognize the prophecies concerning the Messiah. It was their very opposites: the tax-collectors, prostitutes and public sinners who did recognize the Messiah and the Work of God in Jesus, and believed in Him and repented from their sins.

We must ask: why did the chief priests and elders fail to see the truth? Why, like the second son in the parable, say that they are God’s servant, but then refuse to obey God’s Messiah? We miss the point by pointing our finger at them. Why do we fall into the same blindness of thinking we are doing God’s will in our lives, but actually not listening to Him and failing to do His will? The mission of the Gospel is very simple- it doesn’t need an expert to explain it! “Go out into the whole

world, teaching them all that I have taught you to do, and Baptize them in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!”

Why are we blind? Because, we want to be Politically correct, keeping up appearances and being nice, compromising so we don't offend anyone or make anyone mad, satisfying the basic requirements; but not getting too serious about real change and real conversion! So, what is the antidote to the poison that now infects our society and our Church? Be serious about being Saints!

First, open wide your hearts! Open up your minds and hearts to really hear the call of God. Allow Him to touch your hearts in prayer and sacraments, ask Him to fill you with His transforming Grace! Second, become honest with yourself in the light of Christ. Ask God the Holy Spirit to shine in your heart and show you the darkness in your life that needs the light of Christ. Jesus has said: “The Truth will set you free!” Thirdly, work at practicing the Gospel always, not just for an hour on Sunday. Don't distort the Gospel in your life nor with others. The Good news is that God wants our friendship because He has made us for His friendship, regardless of how great a sinner we may be. Encounter Jesus in prayer and sacraments, stay with Him and learn about Him, and share the good news of how He has touched your lives!