

Sunday, September 27, 2026 – Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

First Reading - Ezekiel 18:25-28

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The sinner who decides to turn against sinfulness deserves to live.

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: ‘You object, “What the Lord does is unjust.” Listen, you House of Israel: is what I do unjust? Is it not what you do that is unjust? When the upright man renounces his integrity to commit sin and dies because of this, he dies because of the evil that he himself has committed. When the sinner renounces sin to become law-abiding and honest, he deserves to live. He has chosen to renounce all his previous sins; he shall certainly live; he shall not die.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 24:4-9. R. v.6

(R.) Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Second Reading - Philippians 2:1-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus.

If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people’s interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus:

His state was divine,
yet he did not cling
to his equality with God
but emptied himself
to assume the condition of a slave,
and became as men are;
and being as all men are,
he was humbler yet,
even to accepting death,
death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name
which is above all other names

so that all beings
in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld,
should bend the knee at the name of Jesus
and that every tongue should acclaim
Jesus Christ as Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation - John 10:27

Alleluia, alleluia!

My sheep listen to my voice, says the Lord;

I know them, and they follow me.

Alleluia!!

Gospel - Matthew 21:28-32

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

He went out moved by regret. The tax collectors and prostitutes will precede you into the kingdom of God.

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, you go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not go," but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, sir," but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?' 'The first' they said. Jesus said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, a pattern of true righteousness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him.'

The Courage to Change Course Reflection on the Gospel-26th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A) Veronica Lawson RSM

As we celebrate the fourth and final week in the Season of Creation, we might ponder again the ways in which Earth cares for us and for all of creation. Vineyards have provided nourishment for countless families in the ancient Mediterranean world since about 10,000 BCE. It is not surprising then that the biblical record frequently references vines and vineyards and that the vineyard becomes a metaphor for God's "workplace". In today's gospel, Jesus tells the story of a father who sends his sons to work in the vineyard. One refuses and then reconsiders: this son has the courage to change his mind and engage in life. The second son agrees and then fails to do as his father requests: he is not prepared to make his contribution to family life and wellbeing. These siblings find their counterparts in every age. There are those who make an art form of saying yes and failing to follow through with action: such people can seriously undermine the best of projects or plans. And then there are the slow starters, those who take time but eventually come on board.

Jesus' parable is a response to the Temple authorities who are angered by the "amazing things" he does and by the public recognition he receives from the children in the temple. Like the second son,

the chief priests and elders profess to do the will of God, but their actions belie their words. Jesus spells out the meaning of the parable in so far as it relates to the disjunction between what they say and what they do. They have rejected the prophet John who came to them “in the way of righteousness”. The tax collectors and prostitutes, “sinners” from the perspective of the authorities, accepted John’s message, albeit belatedly like the first son, and are making their way into God’s empire ahead of the guardians of the religious institutions.

Changing one’s mind is often seen as a sign of weakness. For evidence of this, one has only to listen to the taunts in parliament when a political leader changes course in the light of new information.

Changing one’s mind or one’s course of action can be an act of great courage and humility, even heroism. This is particularly so if it involves abandoning a self-serving direction for the sake of justice or compassion or the “common good”. We have the example of those who refused to politicize the pandemic and chose rather to work for the common good across political affiliations: some paid a heavy price. Voluntary changes in behaviour come from a change of heart, from what the gospel calls “metanoia”, reconsidering. There is always a cost in the pursuit of justice. Today’s parable invites us to bring our actions into line with what we profess, no matter the cost. That is what it means to take up the challenge of working in the vineyard, in God’s workplace..