

[131] **TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME** **A**

FIRST READING

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

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel

18:25-28

The Lord says this:
People of Israel, you say,
“The Lord isn’t fair!”
But you are the ones who are wrong.

I am fair,
 and if any of you stop doing right and start sinning,
 you will die because of your sins.
But if any of you turn from your sins and start doing right,
 you will be safe.
You won’t die because of your sins,
 if you really think about the things you have done wrong
 and turn from them.

Do this, and you will go on living.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

R. (6a) Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Show me your paths
and teach me to follow;
guide me by your truth
and instruct me.
You keep me safe,
and I always trust you.

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Please, Lord, remember,
you have always
been patient and kind.
Forget each wrong I did

when I was young.
Show how truly kind you are
and remember me.

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

You are honest and merciful,
and you teach sinners
how to follow your path.
You lead humble people
to do what is right
and to stay on your path.

R. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

SECOND READING

In your minds be as Christ Jesus.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians

2:1-5

Brothers and sisters:
Christ encourages you,
and his love comforts you.
God's Spirit unites you,
and you are concerned for others.
Now make me completely happy!
Live in harmony by showing love for each other.
Be united in what you think,
as if you were only one person.

Don't be jealous or proud,
but be humble and consider others more important than yourselves.
Care about them as much as you care about yourselves
and think the same way that Christ Jesus did.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

John 10:27

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

My sheep listen to my voice, says the Lord;

I know them, and they follow me.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

The son went out moved by regret.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 21:28-32

Jesus said:

“I will tell you a story about a man who had two sons.
Then you can tell me what you think.”

“The father went to the older son and said,
‘Go work in the vineyard today!’
His son told him that he would not do it,
but later he changed his mind and went.
The man then told his younger son to go work in the vineyard.
The boy said he would, but he didn’t go.
Which one of the sons obeyed his father?”

“The older one,” the chief priests and leaders answered.

Then Jesus told them:

“You can be sure that tax collectors and bad women
will get into the kingdom of God before you ever will!
When John the Baptist showed you how to do right,
you would not believe him.
But these evil people did believe.
And even when you saw what they did,
you still would not change your minds and believe.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Opening Prayer:

Open our hearts and help us to listen carefully to the message you have for us, today, Lord! We often forget the great love that you have for us and the many times that you call us to follow you. Sometimes, we forget too, that following You is not always easy, but You want us to ask you for your help.

Readings:

First Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
Second Reading: Reading from Philippians 2:1-5
Gospel: Reading from the Gospel of Matthew 21:28-32

Reflection:

Today in our First Reading, Jesus tells us that even when we make mistakes, or really do something that we know is wrong, God continues to love us. Who can you think of who is also ready to forgive you because he or she loves you?

Sometimes, others hurt us by the bad things they do. Is it easy for us to forgive them? Have you ever forgiven someone? Do you think that Jesus is telling us that we should all be ready to forgive one another?

If we hurt another person or do something wrong like telling stories about others, or taking things that do not belong to us, what do we need to do so that we can be forgiven?

Let's listen again to the Responsorial Psalm.

In the Second Reading, Jesus is asking us to be good to one another. He wants us to do things that will make others happy. Sometimes, when someone has something that we don't have but we would like to have it, we can feel jealous of that person. How do you think people feel when they are jealous?

Sometimes, we make others feel badly because we think that we are better than they are. It is even possible that we look at another person who is different from ourselves and decide that we do not want to play with them or even to be with them. Can you think of some times when someone was left out of a game, or left alone on the playground?

Jesus said that we should care about every other person as much as we care about ourselves. He wants us to love everyone as he loves us.

In our Gospel Reading today we hear about a man who had two sons. When the father asked his sons to do something, one son said that he wouldn't do it, but he changed his mind and did what his dad wanted him to do. The other son said that he would do what his father asked him to do, but he just didn't do it. Jesus is asking us, which one of the sons really loved his dad?

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Jesus tells us that bad people will get into heaven, because they think about what they did and they are sorry. Then, God forgives them. At times, even when we try to be good, we make bad choices. We do things that we should not do, but when we are sorry, God forgives us.

Sometimes, people say they will do something, but they change their minds and they do not do what they promised to do. Jesus tells us that it is not enough to say that we will be good and follow Him. We must make good choices and keep our promises.

Jesus tells us the Good News that God will always take us back. He will always forgive us, if we are sorry for the bad things that we do. And, we need to forgive others in the same way.

ACTIVITY:

Today, let's watch for the times when we need to say that we are sorry. And, let's see how many times we will have the chance to forgive those who have hurt us.