

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time A/2026

We are born as free human beings; but at the same time, we are accountable for any decision we make in our freedom. God, who has created us, has put before us life and death, good and evil, fire and water, so that whichever we choose will be given us. If we choose to keep the commandments, we will live and be saved. If, however, we choose the other path, the contrary will happen to us.

No one can say that God has pushed him to sin or to act unjustly. If things turn bad, it is because of human whim and stubbornness. God's Law is not a limitation of our freedom, but rather a source of blessing and a help so that we assume our responsibility in the things we do.

That is what our Lord thinks of the law. He has come not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. He has come to give to the Law its real meaning and true understanding. What counts the most is not the external aspect of the law, but the inner motive that is known only to the one who acts and to God, and which pushes one to act in one way or another.

What is the essence of the law, then? The essence of the Law is reverence and respect. Reverence of God and his name, reverence of the day of God, respect of parents, respect of human life, respect of neighbor's property, respect of the other, respect of the truth, etc. Reverence and respect are the foundation and the basis of the Law. They will never pass away, because they are the source of our relationship with God and with one another. To try to change this essence with human regulations, as the Scribes and Pharisees had done, is to condemn ourselves to perdition.

By stating that he has come not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it, our Lord is inviting us to understand that life is not a battle between the past and the present. The Law might refer to the past as it was given under Moses and the present to him as it refers to his time, but there is no contradiction between them. On the contrary, there is continuity, because the present grows out of the past.

Our Lord makes a distinction between the external aspect of the law and its internal aspect, the external fact and the internal motivation. The examples he gives about the law on murder, adultery, divorce or swearing makes clear the new way of interpreting the law he has come to bring.

In God's sight and following the inner motive, it is not only the person who has committed murder who is guilty and liable to judgment, but anyone who is angry with his fellow human being. It is not only the person who has committed adultery who is guilty, but anyone who entertains unclean thoughts in his heart about the opposite sex.

In other words, the murder is wrong; but so are other things we do that hurt others and bring pain to them. Demeaning others, calling them names, harboring hatred and animosity are just some examples. In the same way, adultery is wrong; but so are the thoughts, desires, and behaviors that compromise the procreative act in any way!

Thus, our Lord offers us a new perspective in the interpretation of the law that goes from outside inside, from the external consideration of facts to the internal motive that is often hidden in the hearts of people. What our Lord says here is absolutely true, because it might happen that we never killed a person, but can we say that we never wished to strike someone or to harm him? It might be true that we never committed adultery, but can we say that we never had any thought in that sense about someone?

The consequence to draw from such a vision is that it is impossible to claim our innocence before God on the simple fact that we have been respecting the Commandments. Even if we live an external life of perfection, we are not, however, spared from internal conflicts about the good and evil. That is why our Lord insists on the purity of our eyes and our hands. “If your right eye...; if your right hand...”, he says.

We have to be humble enough and recognize that we are sinners and in need God’s forgiveness. The sacrament of confession takes here all its importance. The habit of denigrating people because of their sins or of being condescending with others we judge as sinner is not divine. We need to clearly understand that we cannot make straight our relationship with God if we do not make straight our relationship with our brothers and sisters. That is why our Lord reminds us that the reconciliation with God implies at the same time the reconciliation with our fellows.

Let us strive to keep ourselves pure of heart, mind and body. Let us ask the Holy Spirit the grace of keeping our baptismal promises so that where we exercise our freedom “our Yes means Yes, and our No means No. May God’s wisdom help us to make the right decisions in life, especially when we are in conflicting situations! Amen!

Sirach 15: 15-20; 1 Corinthians 2: 6-10; Matthew 5: 17-37



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