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**Year A** 26TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION AVAILABLE ALSO

## Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Ezekiel 18:25-28

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 24(25):4-9

Second Reading:

Philippians 2:1-11

Gospel:

Matthew 21:28-32

*"Which of the two did the father's will?"*



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## Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [here](#).

Check out [this video](#) on the readings for children.

## Pray

In the Gospel today we hear Jesus really challenging the chief priests and elders.

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- Have you ever been hurt or angered by someone whose words said one thing, but whose actions displayed something very different?
- Have you ever been the one to confuse or let down others by not matching actions to words? If we were to ask ourselves, what would someone learn about Jesus Christ from my actions as a believer, what answer could be honestly give?
- Let's pray this week for a coherence in word and action: that we may act in a way that really shows what we profess we believe in our faith.

## Talk

In today's readings we hear Jesus tell the parable of the two sons asked to do something by their father, with very different reactions:

- Have you ever said you would do something, like help with chores, but then chose not to do it? Or have you been like the second son at times, refusing to help, but later changing your mind?
- What Jesus is asking us for is a change of heart, a conversion. He wants us to be ready and willing to do the Father's will: to not put it off, not grumble or look for excuses. He wants us to be wonderful witnesses of what we believe in Him!

## Family Challenge!

Let everyone this week make an extra special effort to respond joyfully when asked to help out with something. Don't grumble or put it off (hoping someone else will do it in the meantime!) but spring into action, asking Jesus to give you the grace to be a joyful witness to him, and a loving family member!

# ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

The context for today's Gospel is the mounting tension between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders. Jesus has entered Jerusalem and overturned the money changers' tables in the Temple. Jesus has caught the attention of the religious authorities; the chief priests and elders question Jesus about the source of his authority. Jesus refuses to name for these religious leaders the source of his authority. Instead, he questions the priests and elders through the parable we hear in today's Gospel. The answer given by the religious leaders is correct, but it convicts them for their failure to heed the call of John the Baptist and for their inability to recognize the Kingdom of God.

The situation Jesus poses is rather straightforward. Given the same task by their father, one son asserts his disobedience in words, but then obeys in his actions; the second son obeys with his words, but disobeys in his actions. The question that Jesus poses is pointed and direct: Which son did what the father wanted? All would agree that "actions speak louder than words" and that even if his words were disobedient, the son who did the work as ordered did the father's will.

Jesus' conclusion is also direct. The chief priests and elders, the ones who speak most often about God, did not act accordingly. They did not respond to the message of repentance announced by John the Baptist with a change of heart. Instead, John's message was heeded by those one would not expect to repent—tax collectors, prostitutes, and other sinners. Because of their actions, these sinners will enter the Kingdom of God ahead of the religious leaders.

Jesus could ask us the same question. Do our words indicate our obedience to God? If not our words, do our actions? God desires a full conversion of heart, that our actions (and our words as well) will give evidence of our love for God.

taken from **Loyola Press Sunday Connection**

## CHECK IT OUT: POCO A POCO PODCASTS

Join Fr. Innocent, Fr. Angelus and Fr. Mark-Mary, members of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, for their weekly podcast. The Poco a Poco Podcast offers "Practical Spirituality." The friars break open the Gospel in light of their years of prayer, communal life, and work with the poor.

The Poco A Poco Podcast is a source of rest, encouragement, refreshment, and renewal for all pilgrims helping them to discern and make the next best step. Poco a Poco, little by little, step by step we're making our pilgrimage to the Father's house. Find the podcast on **Spotify**, **iTunes**, and **Google Podcasts**.



**PUSHING THROUGH  
WHEN YOU DON'T  
FEEL LIKE IT**

Have you ever been guilty of this? Your mom or dad ask you to load the dishwasher and you say, "I'll do it later" but you know you won't... you're just kind of hoping if you delay it long enough someone else will get tired of the mess and do it, at which point you can saunter into the kitchen and say, "Oh it's done? I was just coming out to load it now!"

Maybe you've never been like that, but we can often say one thing and mean another. In Matthew 5:37 Jesus says, "let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.'" The Chief Priests and Elders in the Gospel today said all the right things, they knew the Law of God inside out, but their actions didn't match their words, and as we've all heard, "Actions speak louder than words". Truth, honesty, integrity, consistency - these are all important qualities for Christians. If you were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? That can be a pretty sobering question. The good news is, like the Parable of Workers in the Vineyard, God gives us plenty of opportunities to serve and obey, to match our actions to our words, to actually live as we proclaim that we do. We can always choose the next right step, do the next right thing - so get up and load the dishes!

### This week:

Be very conscious this week of areas you struggle to motivate yourself in. Maybe it's household chores, assignments, spending time with particular people, cutting down on screen time, serving others: whatever it is, stop and ask yourself where your heart is at, and more importantly, what's your motive for doing the right thing in each situation. Do the next right thing.



"When you don't feel like it": Fr Mike



Audrey Assad: I Shall Not Want



To the Heights Youth Resource also available

## Family Prayer

*Jesus, help us to love you and serve  
you in thought, word and action  
today and everyday. Amen*

## EVENTS

**Evangelium Apologetics Conference for Young Adults:** Saturday 7 October, 11am - 4.30pm, Imperial Hotel Cork. €15. Book in advance. More info on [www.evangelium.ie](http://www.evangelium.ie)

**Encounter for Young Adults:** Friday 13th October, 8pm in St John's Church, Parnell Street, Waterford. Talk, music and prayer followed by pizza and chat! For 18-35 year olds. More info on [www.waterfordlismore.ie](http://www.waterfordlismore.ie)

**Youth2000 Munster Retreat:** Catholic Youth Retreat - faith, fun and fellowship for those aged 16 - 35 years in Middleton Co. Cork, 20 - 22 October. Donation only. For more details and information on how to book go to [www.youth2000.ie](http://www.youth2000.ie)

**Holy Family Mission All Saints Party:** Monday 30th October, Holy Family Mission, Glencomeragh House. Prayer, Talk, Mass, Music, Fun and Games for all the Family! 11am - 2pm. Bring a packed lunch. For more info email [info@holymission.ie](mailto:info@holymission.ie)

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