

Similar theme to last week

It's not fair

Here they are talking of how God treats us

How He will wipe out any remembrance of sin

If we will only turn away from that sin

But if a just person begins to act in wickedness

He will be condemned

But this is in line with an old saying of Aristotle

Don't listen to a person's words

Watch what they do

Our first reading was from Ecclesiastes

And this chapter points to a turning point in spirituality

Earlier in this same chapter we read

A father has eaten green grapes

And his children's teeth are set on edge

In other words

The children pay for the fathers sins

But our reading today points out that our actions matter

Actions have consequences

We have personal responsibility in doing good and avoiding evil

This is at the heart of one of the recent changes in our Creed

We used to say 'We believe'

But now we begin 'I believe'

This shows a personal responsibility

An identity before God

Each one of us, every Sunday

Is called to take a stand

Make a profession of our faith

But not only in words

But in action

So how is it God will wipe out our sin?

St Paul tells us it is through Jesus Christ

The Son of God, who humbled himself on our behalf

And became obedient to the point of death

So we could be washed clean from our sin

The forgiveness offered by God in the Old Testament

Was in anticipation of what was accomplished in the New Covenant

God's mercy offered to all people, and for all times

It is not free

It came at the cost of the life of Jesus

Offered freely for all

So the Church calls all to conversion and belief in the Gospel

So that every knee will bend and every tongue confess

That Jesus Christ is Lord

To the Glory of God the Father

A conversion is illustrated in our Gospel

Where the father goes to his son

Go work in my vineyard today

And he replies 'No'

But then repents and goes

To the second son

The same instruction

This time the reply is 'yes father'

But he never makes it

So Jesus asks: which son did the will of the father?

The one who actually does the work

The one that goes

It is not that our words do not matter

They do

The 'no' of the first son hurt the father

No parent likes to hear this

Go take out the garbage

Clean your room

Walk and feed your dog

If the child replies 'no' it causes pain

It causes pain to our heavenly father as well

We are called to go to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation

For younger children go to CCD classes

Go to confirmation class

For all of us there are days of abstinence and fasting

Our no, our refusal causes pain to the heart of God

When we repent and do what we are called to do causes joy

But we cannot deny the pain that is caused

The same with our 'yes'

This immediately causes joy in a parent

Giving these same instructions

Hearing an immediate yes

But then the parent comes back in a half hour

The task is not done

It is the lack of action that causes pain

So, yes our words do matter

But even more so are our actions

We each have our mission

Look into a mirror and ask God

What is it you are calling me to today?

It may be being faithful to my duties as a husband or wife

A son or daughter

An employer or employee

A student

Or it may be He has a special invitation

To serve Him in a special way

Yeah, it can be a terrifying to ask this question

It can mean that we are called to reverse course

Or it may mean that we stay the course

Fine adjustments

How do we respond to God's invitation?

Am I taking responsibility?

Or do I try to go with the flow?

Hide behind the crowd

How we actually live shows what we truly believe

I may be able to quote Scripture chapter and verse

But am I living my faith?

Patriotism isn't about getting the flag out on July 4th

Having a picnic

It is about voting, paying taxes and being involved in the community

We all have a gap between what we proclaim and how we live

Is Jesus really the Lord of our life?

My finances? My marriage?

My social life? My work?

Conversion isn't so much about joining a church

It is about living faithful Catholic, Christian lives

In everything

This parable shows us that our no can become a yes

With God's grace and our effort

But we also have to be realistic

Our 'yes' can become a 'no'

Sin is alive and well in our world

At Jesus' time, it was tax collectors and prostitutes

It is that and so much more today

TV, movies, music, internet

Sexual sin, gluttony, sloth, envy

We can become comfortable around this

Or we can oppose it, fight it

It is about words and actions

Those that are out there for everyone to see and hear

Those that are hidden in the recess of our heart

What do my actions tell the world?

What do they tell God?

God has an invitation for you

Yes or no?