

October 01, 2017  
26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Lord, guide us in the ways of the Kingdom!**

Ezekiel 18:25-28

Psalms 25:4-9

Philippians 2:1-11

Matthew 21:28-32

In the first reading Ezekiel emphasizes the Lord's ways are fair even if we do not understand them. Those who turn from virtue to iniquity will find spiritual death whereas those who turn away from wickedness to righteousness are brought to life.

The Psalmist seeks the Lord in order to learn right ways, walk in correct paths that lead to truth. The Lord is good and upright, shows sinners the way, guides the humble to justice and teaches them with kindness and compassion.

In the second reading Paul emphasizes we are to have the attitude of Jesus and look out for the interest of others and even regard their interests as more important than our own. Jesus emptied himself, took the form of a slave, humbled himself and was obedient even to death upon the cross. This is why the Father bestowed upon him the name above all other names.

In the Gospel Jesus describes the difference between two sons, one who breaks his commitment to work and the other who has a change of heart and eventually responds to his father's request. The shock to the religious leaders is clear; tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the God's kingdom because they are reforming their ways.

The Father inspires us, The Son encourages us,  
The Holy Spirit guides our participation within the community.

We easily come to the conclusion that oftentimes we are not being treated fairly. Ezekiel suggests that such times may be best used to question our own fairness in dealing with others. The Lord will guide us to the truth, says the psalmist, and our humble approach will lead us to appropriate justice. Jesus shocks his listeners, many of whom believed themselves to be righteous, when he says those looked down at as sinners are often the ones who are being responsive to the guidance of the Spirit and making appropriate changes in their lives. Give some thought to your fairness in judging others.

It may well have turned out that when the father eventually went out to inspect the work he requested and saw it completed, the credit was given, at least for a while to the wrong son. Life is often that way and there are times when the wrong people are given credit, but as it is said, "what goes around comes around" and justice will find its equilibrium value.



The son who started out as obstinate came to a self-recognition and made a self-change; this kind of change is said to "read easy but does hard." Perhaps, as this son, we too need to search out just one fault, one obstinate attitude, and work hard to eliminate it. Peace of mind does not depend upon conditions outside of us, but rather on those inside of us. Distress and frustration fade when corrective attitudes overcome them.



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