

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Oftentimes, changes in our thoughts and attitudes are preceded by taking action. We might find it difficult to think our way into right action, but when we take action, our mindset and perspective begin to change. Like last week, this week's Gospel Reading is set in a vineyard. Jesus shares a parable of two brothers asked to tend to their father's vineyard:

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people:

"What is your opinion?"

A man had two sons.

He came to the first and said,

'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.'

He said in reply, 'I will not, '

but afterwards changed his mind and went.

The man came to the other son and gave the same order.

He said in reply, 'Yes, sir, 'but did not go.

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

Attitude and action do not always cooperate with each other. As in the case with the first son in this parable, we do not always feel like doing what is asked of us. Sometimes, we might feel like we are unfairly put in a position to be impacted by someone else's misbehavior. This can add to the temptation to isolate in our pain under the belief that no one else can understand. Brooding over the situation and seeking the pity of others prolongs action, which includes tending to our side of the street. Have you had any reluctance seeking freedom for yourself rather than a solution for someone else's problem?

Good intentions are nice, but our actions and behaviors ultimately form our attitude. In recovery, we are asked to take on an attitude that seeks the well-being of others and trusts God's divine plan. Extending a helping hand to another is an action, not an intention. Coming to groups like this, reflecting on scripture, involving ourselves in the community, and sharing with others is a recipe that helps create this attitude within us.

Ultimately, God's incredible patience must not be overlooked. His generosity toward us leads the way for us to be generous, merciful, and loving to others. There may be times when we need an attitude adjustment, and we can look to Christ as our ideal per the direction of this week's Second Reading:

*If there is any encouragement in Christ,
any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit,
any compassion and mercy,
complete my joy by being of the same mind,
with the same love,
united in heart, thinking one thing.
Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory;
rather, humbly regard others as more important
than yourselves,
each looking out not for his own interests,
but also for those of others.
Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ
Jesus,
Who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God something to be
grasped.
Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave, coming in human
likeness;
and found human in appearance,
he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross.*

Working through the twelve steps helps create this attitude within us by leading with action. Taking the time to actively pursue the spiritual work of the twelve steps is an undertaking that often happens before a shift in our attitude and thoughts.

Jesus was most like God in his willingness to share fellowship with the most ornery of humanity—even with those who tell God off and later come back to Him sheepishly. Let us adopt the same willingness to pursue God's will and maintain a grateful attitude.

- What actions do you take on a regular basis to maintain a faithful attitude and healthy thoughts?
- Can you think of a time when taking action helped transform your thoughts and guide your attitude for good?
- What is it like for you to change your mind after a moment of self-reflection or upon being presented new information?

Catholic in Recovery Novena

Sign up today and join the Catholic in Recovery community as we unite in prayer!

- Receive a reflection and prayer in your inbox each day for 9 days
- Journey with the intercession of St. Jude, St. Monica, St. Joseph, St. Augustine and other saints
- related to addiction recovery
- Register at catholicinrecovery.com/novena

Sunday Mass Readings this Week

1st Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28

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

2nd Reading: Philippians 2:1-11

Gospel: Matthew 21:28-32