Sunday, February 12, 2023

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

**SUNDAY’S READINGS:** Sirach 15:15-20; 1 Corinthians 2:6-10; Matthew 5:17-37

**SUNDAY’S GOSPEL:**

 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven. I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raqa,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna. Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him.  Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away.  It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.’ But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

“Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all; not by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Let your ‘Yes’ mean ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ mean ‘No.’ Anything more is from the evil one.

**QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY DISCUSSION IN PREPARATION FOR SUNDAY**

1. Jesus has very harsh words for those who lead others to sin, even in little ways. Who are the people (other family members, friends, etc.) that you impact when you break God’s commandments even in little ways? How could your example lead them to sin? How could your example affect them even if they don’t directly see you do it? If you are an adult or older sibling, why do you think your example might be that much more important?
2. To the average Jew at the time of Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees were pretty holy (righteous) people, but Jesus still said that our holiness/righteousness had to be more than there’s. Even though the scribes and Pharisees were DOING the right thing, they often didn’t have the right reason, or they tried to find loopholes for getting out of what God was asking. What are some ways that you have tried to do “just the minimum” or have tried to get out of what God was asking you to do? How is that different from other times when you didn’t try to do that?
3. Jesus tells us that it’s important to go beyond just the literal commandment. “Thou shall not kill” – what are the ways that someone might harm people physically, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, etc., even if it wasn’t directly killing them?
4. In today’s Gospel, Jesus also tells us about the importance of being reconciled with others – that we should even do it before we offer our gift at the altar. Share a story of when you’ve told another family member that you were sorry. How did doing that impact your relationship with that person? With God?