

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A (2026)

Have you ever interviewed for a job? Do you remember how you got so excited when you heard two of the sweetest words in the English language, “You’re hired”?

For the first few months, everything goes as planned. You’re happy, and your boss is happy. But then something happens. Your supervisor starts asking you to do things that weren’t part of the deal, weren’t part of the expectations that were laid out in the interview process.

At first, you go along—but soon, frustration starts to build. And bitterness. And anger. Until one day, you storm into your manager’s office, and you tell her, “None of these things you are having me do were in my job description!”

We like to know exactly what is expected of us when we sign up for a particular course in high school or college. Or when we decide to join a sports team. Or volunteer for a ministry. Or even when we get married.

Many of us simply don’t want new expectations to be thrown in at a later date. Just tell me what I need to do or not do—right from the beginning. Don’t change the rules as we go along.

I wonder if the disciples felt that way as they heard Jesus' teaching about God's commandments in today's Gospel. Was Jesus changing the rules the disciples had learned as children?

- He brings up not killing and then starts talking about being angry.
- He brings up not committing adultery and then starts talking about looking lustfully.
- He brings up not lying in a legal dispute and then starts talking about— saying “yes” when we mean “yes” and “no” when we mean “no”.

Simply put, Jesus is taking things that were once very clear, very black and white, and suddenly making them obscure, ambiguous, and all too vague.

Here's the question: Why would Jesus do that?

Most of us want nothing more from Jesus than clarity— what God wants us to do or not to do. We want God to tell us exactly what is expected of us in every situation. I mean, is that not the point of and “don'ts?

Aren't the Ten Commandments just simple statements that give us a blueprint for the moral life? And if we do our best to follow them, can we not be assured that we have nothing to worry about?

However, Jesus seems to be saying something different— narrow “rules” are broad categories that are meant to cover large parts of our lives.

- And so, it might be easy to not have any other Gods—but not if those “gods” include things in this life which have power over us, or which take first priority.
- And it might be easy not to steal, but not if that includes things such as other people’s reputations, hopes, and dignity.
- And it might be easy not to kill, but not if that includes wide-ranging examples such as the unborn, the aged, the environment, or sacred relationships.
- It might be easy not to covet, but not if that includes continually striving to get more than our fair share, regardless of what everyone else gets.

Being faithful is not simply making a few right choices concerning a few big issues. Being faithful involves our whole being. Being faithful is embracing a whole new way of life—the life God created us to live.

“Jesus lived, died, and rose again, not to abolish our **HAPPINESS** but to fulfill it.”