

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**  
**October 1, 2023**

**Gospel: (Mt. 21: 28-32)**

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders: “*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? They answered, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.”*”

**Reflection:**

This Gospel is a great example of saying, “actions speak louder than words.” It is a reminder that belief isn’t a matter of saying yes or professing creeds. Belief is action, follow-through. Those who believed in John the Baptist changed their minds, that is their lives, by repenting. Those who believe in Jesus do the same. If tax collectors and prostitutes (symbols for great sinners) can enter the kingdom of God, then there’s got to be great hope for all of us! Taking their lead, all we need to do is make change a permanent part of our life. Spirituality is about growth that can only come from the willingness to let go and change. (Living Liturgy, p.244)

**Vincentian Meditation:**

“Aren’t the poor the suffering members of our Lord? Aren’t they our brothers and sisters? ... We should assist the poor in every way and do it both by ourselves and by enlisting the help of others... To do this is to preach the gospel by words and by work.” –St. Vincent de Paul- (McKenna, Praying with Vincent, p. 64)

**Discussion:** (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

**Do our actions speak louder than our words?**

**Closing Prayer:**

Jesus, servant of the poor,  
-**may we be carriers of your good news to the poor**  
Jesus, servant of the poor,  
-**help to serve those who lack resources, who lack options, who lack power over their lives.**  
Jesus, servant of the poor,  
-**may we help the poor by acts of compassion that alleviate their needs and give them hope.**  
Jesus, servant of the poor,  
-**grant that we may bring the goodness of God to the poor, in our actions and our words. Amen.**

