

20250921. 25th Sunday of the OT. You cannot serve two masters.

You can't serve two masters. If you serve one, you'll end up in trouble with the other. We've undoubtedly heard this saying before, and we listen to it again today. Deep down, we all know that we cannot satisfy two conflicting desires. Our mind would like to believe it's possible, but our heart can't conceive of two opposing effects, and that is because we are called to integrity. We are called to integrity in our hearts; we are called to integrity and unity between body and soul.

We are called to have unity of heart, unity of mind, and unity of spirit to be whole and holy. When we speak of integrity, we refer to the coherence between what we say we believe and what we truly believe, which is evident in our actions. Integrity refers to this inner unity, where we have a clear focus and always act in alignment with it. If we possess this integrity, we enjoy peace and serenity, for there is no longer any conflict between who we are, what we believe, and how we act.

The Gospel of Luke speaks about this today. Without a doubt, this parable is one of the most confusing in all of Scripture. How can we reconcile the servant's deceit with that of the master, who first discovers this dishonesty and plans to dismiss him, but then rewards him for his actions?

To contextualize and, hopefully, do it justice, we must analyze today's Gospel in light of what last Sunday's Gospel would have been. Please recall that last Sunday we celebrated the Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross; therefore, we omitted the usual reading for the 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, which corresponds to chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel.

Chapter 15 of the Gospel of Luke contains three parables: the Parable of the Lost Sheep, the Parable of the Lost Coin, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son. These parables show us God's illogical love, how His love is like that of a shepherd who leaves 99 sheep in the desert to search for the one that was lost. We wouldn't do that, would we? Or the woman who has nine coins, and searches for a lost one, and then the father who was rejected by his son, yet waits patiently for him and, upon his return, despite everything, embraces him and forgives him completely.

We examine these parables and, when we compare them with today's, we see that God's ways of loving are entirely different from ours. God is unconditional love, and therefore, He always loves us, no matter the circumstances. But most of us, as human beings, are prone to sin, and often we are so absorbed in it that we justify it, and sometimes even reward it.

As humans, we've always had the potential for a lack of integrity, which is why we're drawn to sin, which, by definition, is straying from God's will. And we're good at it; we often even rationalize it and seek justification. We try to rationalize the irrational.

By straying from God's infinitely wise and loving plan, we lose the integrity He desires for us. The opposite of the integrity we are called to possess is a form of hypocrisy: the contradiction between what we claim to believe and what we actually believe.

This is the evil denounced in our first reading... Amos, a prophet of the northern kingdom of Israel, observed the widespread corruption in that society, particularly among those who claimed to follow religious observance. Those, as we hear in that reading, who wait for the end of the Sabbath to settle their balance and cheat. In this story, a notable distinction is evident between what is said in public and what is done in private. We must consider that, although this is a human weakness, it does not mean that we should remain there. We all know that God has expectations for us and calls us to overcome our weaknesses to seek and achieve the ideal level of behavior. God seeks our integrity.

In our second reading, Saint Paul affirms that there is only one God. Here we see how God's integrity is perfect. God is love, and he always acts in that love. Therefore, we, created in his image and likeness, are called to strive for this. We are not a combination of two people: one who attends Mass every Sunday with devout faith, and another who lives the rest of the week with different motivations. We are called to be people of one mind and one heart.

Christ came into the world and taught us always to speak and act with love. He invites us to interact with others always with sensitivity, respect, and reverence. Always. No matter what. This is what Saint Paul writes in our second reading: that in our prayer and thanksgiving, we may openly lift our arms and lead a quiet and serene life in all devotion and dignity, because we live a life of integrity, body and soul.

What is the first and most important motivation in our lives? Is it God whom we are called to love above everything else? Or ourselves? Do we do what we want, or what God wants us to do? Let this be our goal: to live in accordance with God's ways. Remembering that no servant can serve two masters, may everything we do be an expression of our love for Christ.

Jesus came to live among us for our salvation. He came to us so that we might all know the truth. The truth of the gospel is that God is unconditional love, an irrational love.

Let us make sure we know, live, and practice this truth. Today's Gospel invites us to live this truth by always practicing merciful, unconditional, and even irrational love in the way we forgive and treat others, regardless of the situation.

Am 8:4-7

Ps 112:1-2, 4-8,

1 Tim 2:1-8

Luke 16:1-13