

## FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 11-12, 2023

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Gospel reading

Matthew 5:17-37

“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, ‘Raca,’ 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.

## **Intercession**

That, filled with zeal to spread the Good News, we may exceed the goals of our *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

## **Copy for bulletin announcement**

God doesn’t un-say anything. Today, Christ asserts that for those hoping for a ‘free pass,’ “Not... the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law” (Matthew 5:18). The law is God’s unchangeable word, and all will be judged according to His law.

Yet, inasmuch as God will not recant his law, neither will he recant his mercy. Technically speaking, our hope should abound because, according to Saint Thomas Aquinas, “It is more proper for God to spare and to show mercy than to punish. For the former belongs to him by reason of his nature, the latter only by reason of our sins” (Summa Theologica II, II, 21, 2).

Yet some people don’t know his law. While God’s mercy may account for this, they will still suffer judgment under the law. Jesus gave our parish the task of sharing the good news that he came to save us from the law. Our Catholic parish is the most direct local route for our community to reach Him and our *Catholic Ministry Appeal* seeks to help more people get access to Him. Please support our *Catholic Ministry Appeal* today. We need your generosity, prayers, and advocacy. Let’s bring souls from our community to his merciful feet!

## **Copy for pulpit announcement**

Today's Gospel sets a high bar and exciting possibilities for Christ's followers. When you give to our *Catholic Ministry Appeal*, you enable each of us to fulfill Christ's commands, and your 'Yes' to him mean 'Yes' in all things (Matthew 5:37)! Your donations and prayers will help us make good on our call to be a light to the world. Pray that through our *Catholic Ministry Appeal*, Jesus can grow our parish and diocese into what He wants it to be!

## **Social media post/content**

Photo: A realistic painting of Jesus preaching to the crowds in the Sermon on the Mount.

Header: "Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes.'" - Matthew 5:37

Sub-header: Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Copy: God asks a lot of his followers in today's Gospel. On top of the 613 commandments in Torah, Jesus sets an even higher bar in Matthew 5.

Jesus tasked our parish with a mission to evangelize. With your prayers, generosity, and advocacy, we can help others find the hope we discovered: that while the bar is high, Christ is higher. Support our *Catholic Ministry Appeal* so we can support our community and reach His bar together!