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## Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ez 18:25-28 | Phil 2:1-11 | Mt 21:28-32

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

### **GROW AS A DISCIPLE** | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Ask any long-time educator, and they'll tell you we often learn more from our mistakes than from doing it perfectly from the start. Today's Gospel also seems to send the same message: Jesus tells us that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before the chief priests and elders. Perhaps this is because they – having lived a sinful life – know firsthand the emptiness of not following God's ways. Having gotten it wrong, they now earnestly seek what is right. The mystic Julian of Norwich writes, "First the fall, and then the recovery from the fall, and both are the mercy of God." Even in our wanderings, God is at work, drawing us to return to him. Ezekiel tells us that when we respond to that grace and turn from the wickedness we have committed, doing what is right and just, we will surely not die, but receive the gift of eternal life from the God who is Mercy itself.

### **GO EVANGELIZE**

#### **PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT**

Speaking to the Christian community at Philippi, St. Paul reminds them to have "the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus." The previous lines offer a glimpse of what that attitude entails: encouragement, love, compassion, mercy, unity, humility, regarding others as more important than ourselves. These attitudes should shape our way of relating to those whom we are trying to evangelize. Rather than judging them or thinking of ourselves as more important, we are called to serve them with humility, offering them our encouragement to seek the Lord who loves them so much that he gave his life for them.

### **REFLECT**

Today's Gospel includes the story of a son who initially says no to his father's request but then changes his mind and does it. The Gospel ends with a line about how the chief priests and elders did not change their minds even when they saw tax collectors and prostitutes responding to John's call to repentance. Indeed, the Greek word for conversion is *metanoia*, which has been defined as "a change of mind that leads to a change in action." Take some time today to do an examination of conscience, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of thinking that need conversion and change. What might the Holy Spirit want to change your mind about this day?