

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, October 5, 2025

When we get to the end, and when we come in from spending our life working in the Lord's vineyard, we will not be entitled to take our place at the Lord's table. We will depend completely and solely on God's mercy. We may say, "*We are unprofitable servants, we have done what we were obliged to do.*" The Gospel shows us that that we are entitled to nothing. We are entitled to nothing. We should not think that we are something special simply because we did our job. "*We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do.*" Actually, I am not sure that I can honestly say that. How have I done what I was obliged to do? I can think of many times I have fallen short. Many times, I have deliberately chosen not to do what I ought to do. So how can I stand before the Lord and say, "I've done all that I was obliged to do?" When we get to that moment, we will rely on God's mercy. And His mercy alone.

But what are we obliged to do as disciples of Jesus? Many of us learned early on what the obligations of Catholic religion were. We sum these up in the Precepts of the Catholic Church, right? Go to Mass every Sunday and Holy Days; fast and abstain on prescribed days; go to Confession at least annually; receive Communion at least annually during the Easter season; and offer material support to the Church. These are the Precepts of the Church, they represent a minimum for a Catholic life, maintaining, sustaining a spiritual life.

It reminds me a little bit of learning to do things when we were kids. Our parents teach us: "Here is how we make pancakes," or "Here is how you fix a flat tire on a bicycle." "Here is how you write a check." "Here is you write a letter." "Here is how you run a lawnmower." Maybe we were sort of taught: "Here is how you do religion. You go to church on Sundays, you say your prayers every day, you give a little

money to the church and to the poor.” You try to be a good, honest, and kind person. I am not here to say that that is wrong, but I say, it's a good start. That is not the apex of living a Christian life, saying, “Well, I did the bare minimum.”

Are there not other obligations in the Christian life? Think about the teachings of the Lord Jesus. He said: “*Forgive. Take up your cross. Deny yourself.*” He said: “*Love one another as I have loved you. Turn the other cheek.*” *Give to the poor. Set your hand to the plow, do not look back. Go and make disciples.*” Are these not obligations of the Christian life? Jesus said, “*If you want to be my disciple, do these things.*” Can we really say we do all those things? I look at my own life and say, ‘well, I will give it a shot, I hope it is my best shot,’ but I've fallen short a lot.

The trouble is when we don't allow our faith to permeate all the areas of our life. We allow God into some parts and in other parts we say, ‘Thank you, but I'm going to maintain control here. I want to be in charge.’ The Apostles come to Jesus, and they say, “*Increase our faith.*” Increase our faith. Faith ought to be the guiding force of our life. It is the lens through which we see everything, through which we perceive the world around us, the events that happen in the circumstances of life. And it is not just one part of among many other parts.

Faith is central; faith permeates everything. When we look at relationships, how would we relate with other people? Does our faith always guide us in those relationships? Maybe it is someone who has harmed us or hurt us or offended us. Someone who we disagree with. When I look at that person do I say to myself, “My faith governs the way that I engage with that person,” or do I allow my emotions to guide me instead? What about the way to make

decisions at work, or in my business dealings? Does my faith come into play there? What do I spend my money on? Does my faith impact that? Yes. How do I spend my time? Raising the children, watching grandkids, does my faith come into that? Or sometimes do you say, “Well, I kind of have to have to set my faith aside when the grandkids come over.” Or when I am at a family reunion. It is unfortunate that religion falls into that category of ‘things that we are not supposed to talk about.’ I can go on about for a long time with that, I suppose. What about the way I suffer? The way I deal with new trials in life? Does my faith provide the firm bedrock for dealing with those trials? What about the media we consume? The way we vote? Politics? Does faith permeate all of that? Or is faith allowed in some parts, but not all parts of our life? Do we carry on our life according to a well-formed conscience, bathed in a life of faith?

There was a seminarian some time ago who was smart, athletic, devout, relatable, seemed like he had everything going for him and people would say, “Oh, he is just going to make a great priest!” Well, after Christmas break one year, he didn't come back to the seminary and the other seminarians asked one of the priests in charge, “What happened to so and so? He left the seminary. What happened?” The priest responded, “He never made the interior move.” He never made the interior move. You can do all the studies, ace the courses, do all these sorts of things. We can say all kinds of prayers. But what about the interior move? There has to be that interior move. I think about our young people, teens, younger, in our parish, we teach them how many persons are in the Holy Trinity. We teach them how many sacraments there are in the Church. We catechize; we give them all kinds and the teachings of the church, but I ask myself, will they make the interior move before they go off to college and are on their own and will have to decide whether they pursue a life of faith?

I consider number of people who are interested in becoming Catholic, joining the church. Beyond being convinced by the truth of the Church's teaching or feeling a sense of community or fellowship, are they making the interior move in such a way that will sustain them in the practice of a faith until the end of their life?

The same question can be asked for all of us, even if we been Catholic for many, many long years - have we made the interior move? Are we making the interior move? Are we embracing that life of ongoing conversion, opening up every dimension of our life to our faith allowing our relationships with God into every place?

We don't do a perfect job in all of that. None of us is perfect. And you know, I'm not here to discourage you or you know to give a depressing kind of homily. No. There is good news in today's words, right? The Lord speaks to you through prophet in the first reading. *"The vision still has its time."* Our journey is not over yet. It is not too late. We have until our last breath to give ourselves completely over to God. Well, why wait? Why wait until the last breath? Why not do it today? Invite Our Lord into those different parts of our life where we have not invited Him or we can identify some sort of resistance to Him. The Lord says there is still time. His vision of our holiness, our growth in our relationship with Him; our growth in virtue, goodness, there is still time.

Saint Paul writes to Timothy: *"I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands."* Well, there is our answer, isn't it? "Stir into flame, allow the Lord to stir into flame the gifts He has given to us. The gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling in our soul." Let us not sort of keep that flame over here, but let the Lord pour the gas on it, you know, let it burn, let it erupt in us in a great, higher love for Him.

The Eucharist can accomplish all of this in us when we receive this Sacrament orderly. When we receive this Sacrament knowing what we are doing, attentive to what we are doing. Not with a sense of entitlement. But with humility, with reverence, with focus, humbly recognizing the body and blood of the Lord. Conforming ourselves, conforming our eyes to His plan for us. This Sacrament has the power to change our whole life and transform.

We don't want to get to the end and merely say, “*We are unprofitable servants. We have done what we were obliged to do.*” We want to meet the Lord face to face and say, “Lord, I lived my life in friendship with you. I spent my life; my life burned with the fire of faith.”