

Twenty-Three in Ordinary Time – A 2020
Ez. 33.7-9///Romans 13.8-10///Matthew 18.15-20

→a ticket seller for an airport limousine service said to a father...“sir your son looks young for his age...take a half-fare ticket and if the driver questions you...just say the boy’s under twelve and save yourself a few bucks”

→a mother and daughter came home from the supermarket and soon the mother notices that her 8 year old is eating a candy bar that wasn’t part of what she bought...

→finally.....your son’s best friend is over studying and you over hear him say“if you need any answer in the math test tomorrow, just give me a signal”

→three fairly common scenarios that perhaps you can, [at least] relate too...not big deals when you think about it...but nonetheless dilemmas that bring us face to face with a moral decision.....modern day examples [if you will] of what Jesus and today’s first and second readings are talking about.

→so what would you do in each of those cases I just mentioned....would you ...own up to the fact your son is older than twelve and pay the higher fare...would you return to the supermarket and make your daughter apologize for stealing...would you sit the two boys down and explain to them that cheating on a test is wrong?

I truly wonder if that would be the case these days...after all...it seems to becoming more common to revel [even applaud] people who can get away with whatever they can without getting caught...

→and so perhaps we really needs to ask ourselves.....would we, if in similar situations, do what is right...or not. <PAUSE>

→our gospel reading today is about dealing with people and how we deal with right and wrong...especially when it applies to ourselves.

→and today Jesus gives us an explicit, simple and easy-to-follow directive and command about dealing with others...especially when they have wronged us or we have wronged them.

→our gospel passage is very eye-opening when you think about it...because ---in a sense, Jesus acknowledges to the disciples that there are going to be conflicts and differences among people...there are going to be times when we are in situations where we have done something wrong and we have to make it right

➔ [THAT] as we all know.....is part of human nature

→however the point that J. makes is that it is our responsibility to not only to do what is right... but also to help others [lead others to also] do what is right as well....

→so what would be our response to each of those cases I just mentioned....[after all in some sense they really aren't that big of a deal or are they]

→what would a follower of Jesus say to the limousine ticket seller who said... “just tell the limousine driver that your son is under twelve.”?...

→what would a follower of Jesus do with the young girl who stole the candy bar from the supermarket?...

→what would a follower of Jesus say to those who are contemplating cheating on a test?

PAUSE

→our readings today...give us straightforwardly the right answer when Ezekiel says... “if you do not warn the wicked to change their ways I will hold you responsible...

when Paul writes.... “if you love someone you will never lead them to do wrong”

and when Jesus says... “if someone sins against you...go and reconcile with them”

→I think the point of today’s readings is for us to realize that there comes a time when we must speak out against evil... challenge those who are involved in wrongdoing....

→when we can no longer remain silent in the face of sinfulness.

→and in today's Gospel, J. tells us...no matter how uncomfortable that might be...how to do just that

PAUSE

→as baptized members of Christ’s Body...and as people of faith.....we are constantly being called to speak out against evil and wrongdoing...and to speak up for what is right...no matter how difficult or hard that may be...

→because... when we do speak up for what is right.... it is then that we are acknowledging Jesus Christ before others...and truly living the faith we profess...

...it is then that we are following the way of Jesus.

PAUSE

→the Word of God, we just heard....and the bread and wine, we will soon share is an expression of what we share with Christ

→but hearing the word, eating the bread, [drinking the cup]...doesn’t mean much...if we are not about doing what is right and proper in our lives....

→in the end.....the challenge and responsibility before each of us IS TO go forth and share this with others..... by committing ourselves to not only speak but to act, live and remain steadfast in doing what is

always right, always just and always proper..

finis.....