

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time October 1, 2017

How many times have we said to God: God if you do this I promise I will do this and so. In the Mary Poppins movie Mary Poppins when Jane and her brother promise to be good, she calls these Piecrust Promises, they are easily made and easily broken. I know that they are easily broken, but tin the kitchen pie crust for me is not easy to make.

When I was a student, just before a test I would promise that if God would let me get a passing grade, I would study harder next time. Or, how about this one, If I win the lottery, I will, the money to the Church. If you get me out of this jamb, I will never do that again.

It is possible that when a promise is made, it is kept such as marriage. A gentleman in Ogdensburg when I was a young priest. Frank Murray, God rest his soul, promised that if his two sons would come back from the war, he would devote his life to the Church. He kept his promise and was a great man of the church and a great leader in the community volunteering where ever. He was needed.

The gospel is for us is a warning about making pie crust promises. The story of and keep them the two brothers, one who promises and does not deliver and one who balks but in the end, does deliver, is also a story of conversion of heart. The story is meant to remind us that God is not so much interested in words but is much more interested in actions. Faith is not a matter of knowing what to say. Faith is a matter of knowing what to do and then doing it.

I don't know about you but I speak for myself that that is easier said than done but I am a sinner and every once in a while, I fail to make the mark which is what would Jesus do or say. We know we are weak and a flawed creature but with God's grace we can make promises and keep them. We celebrate married people who have lived many years together. We celebrate Priests, Deacons and Sisters that have kept their vows. And we all know people like Mr. Murray who served the Church and the community until he was in his eighties. He was the Chairman of the Bishop's fund and would go to house to house if he had to in order to make the parish goal.

Last week we heard one vineyard story and this week as well. We are laborers in the vineyard. What is your particular place in the vineyard like. Your home your work, your neighborhood, school. Do I plant the good seed of the gospel? How do we model the compassion, forgiveness, and love of God and neighbor that Jesus calls us to do where ever we find ourselves?

We are called to make a conversion of heart not just once and for all but on a continual basis until we get it right. God's grace gives us strength and hope that we can do better next time. He has given us the promise of life and to have life to the fullest.