

Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year

Making choices

INTRODUCTION

Every day of our lives we have to make choices. Sometimes we make the wrong choice, and do something we shouldn't. Remember that whenever we have had a change of heart, Jesus is always ready to give us another chance to put things right.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles, listen carefully to the words of this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, hear me do,
help me find my way to you.
Help me choose not bad, but good,
as you tell me, Lord, I should.
Help me do no wrong, but right,
shining always with your light.

SORRY

Ask one of the children to choose a sorry colour.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 4:
Praise the Lord

GOSPEL (cf Matthew 21:28-32.)

Jesus told this story to the high priests: 'Once there was a man who had two sons. He said to the older one, 'Go and work in the vineyard today,' but the son answered, 'I will not go because I don't want to.' Later the son changed his mind and went to work after all.

When the man asked his other son to go and work in his vineyard too, he said, 'Of course I will go,' but he did not do what he said he would.

Jesus asked the high priests, 'Which of these sons did what their father wanted?'

'The older one of course,' they replied.

Jesus said to them, 'The people you call sinners will enter God's kingdom before any of you, because they listened and believed what John the Baptist told them. You would not listen and believe, and your hearts have not changed.'

DISCUSSION

Did the older son do what his father wanted straight away? – At first he chose to do what he wanted and not what he knew was right. Later he felt bad about this choice, had a change of heart

and went to work in the vineyard.

What did the second son do? – Although at first he agreed to go and work, he chose to ignore what his father had asked, and do what he wanted instead.

Why did Jesus compare the older son with the people the high priests called sinners? – These people had made bad choices in their lives and done the wrong thing. But they listened to John the Baptist's message, and like the older son they realised that they were wrong. They too had a change of heart and tried to do what was right.

Why were the high priests like the second son? – They heard John the Baptist's message but had not listened to it. They were not ready to admit that they had made the wrong choices in their lives, or to ask for God's forgiveness. Their hearts were not ready to change and they were not willing to live as Jesus showed them.

What is the message of this parable? – Even if we get things wrong and make foolish choices, God will always give us a second chance to make things right again, if we have a change of heart. By making the right choices in our lives, we will be welcomed into the kingdom of God.

ACTIVITY

Give each child a copy of the maze so they can find the way to God's kingdom.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, when I choose the way to go,
help me choose the good way.
When I choose the things to say,
help me say what you'd say.
Help me always do what's right;
keep me always in your sight.