

HOMILY - 26TH SUNDAY - YEAR A - Sept. 26/27, 2026

Ezekiel 18:25-28

Philippians 2:1-11

Matthew 21:28-32

I welcome you all, my brothers and sisters to this Eucharistic Celebration.

Today the Word of God reminds us that **ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS. In our faith, GOOD ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS.**

In the first reading, the Prophet Ezekiel reminds us that God gives us a chance to change. He says: "But if a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall preserve his life." (Ezekiel 18:27). Like the first son in the Gospel, we can change our mind today and do good. It is never too late to do the right thing.

In the gospel reading, Jesus tells us of a father with two sons. He tells them to go to work in the vineyard. The first says, 'I will not go,' but later he goes to work. The second says, 'Yes, I will go,' but he does not go. Who did the father's will? The one who acted. God does not want only sweet words - empty promises from us. He wants us to respond with concrete deeds - practical good actions.

This reminds me of my seminary days in philosophy. I had a group of friends. We were always ready for good action. Whenever there was communal work, we were present. We were known for that good spirit. In 2015, at our graduation, we did not want to leave because the seminary had become part of us. There were others who would say to us, 'Why are you suffering?' But I tell you, the good works we did then have paid us a million times.

My dear brothers and sisters, I know you are doing great work. You are good Christians. You listen to the Word of God. St. James challenges us: "So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." (James 2:17). Let us accompany our belief with good actions and good manners. Parents, teach your children good discipline, teach them about God, about good behavior and keep them in the Catholic Church.

Our perfect example is Jesus Christ in practical good actions. A practical love for us sinners. In the second reading; St. Paul says: "He humbled himself and became obedient (to the will of God the Father) to the point of death - even death on a cross." (Philippians 2:8). He did not only say 'I love you.' He showed it on the Cross - enduring the greatest pain.

We have modern examples too. **Blessed Fulton Sheen, beatified last Thursday, September 24, 2026**, lived a practical faith. Every day he made a Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament and prayed the Holy Rosary. He taught that the Holy Rosary prayed in every home every day is a weapon against evil. How many homes pray the HOLY ROSARY every day?

So today, I challenge us to live our faith with the **THREE Cs**:

First, **CONSISTENTLY** - Do good every day, not only when people watch.

Second, **WITHOUT COMPARING** - Do not compare your family to another. Your responsibilities to another. God gave each one of us different tasks.

Third, **WITHOUT COMPLAINING** - St. Paul says: "Do all good things without grumbling or questioning." (Philippians 2:14). Work with joy. Work when you are happy. For example, a Mother or a Father, cooking at home, cook with joy. Let the children see you happy while preparing the meal.

If we live these three Cs, our faith will be practical throughout our daily life, and like Ezekiel says, we shall preserve our life in God.

May Mother Mary, who said 'Yes' and lived it, and St. Bavo, pray for us. Amen.