

| Date | Sunday | Reading |
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| 20201004 | T17 | Matthew 11:25-30 |

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| Post Communion Prayer |
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| <p>Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p> |
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Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

²⁷ 'All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord our strength and our Redeemer. **Amen.** *Psalm 19:14*

Obedience is something we teach our children.

We teach them to obey us, to do as we tell them to do.

This obedience is vital for their general welfare and safety.

"Don't run or you'll fall!

Don't go near the main road!

Don't interrupt when others are speaking!

Clean your teeth!

Put your clothes away!

Make your bed!

Go to sleep!

This list goes on and on.

All these commands need to be given, and however reluctantly must be obeyed, if we are to take a positive part in the general drama of life.

And, as children, we need to be told - though we so often do not like it - because we do not understand the whys and wherefores of life.

Our parents must guide us until we are able to understand, and to do these things without being told.

As children, we obey because we are told to.

When we grow up, we obey the directives of life because we understand and appreciate what they mean.

We have come to grasp the value of the laws of life, and we become our own authority.

We direct ourselves in the world.

We become, as it were, self-governing.

If we are grown up, we will live obediently because we understand how good and important it is to do so.

That said, I have a sign alongside my desk that says: "I have been putting a

lot of thought into it and I don't think being an adult is going to work for me." But being serious, if we are childish, we will obey only when we must, or if we think someone is watching.

For example, on the motorways, our selfish and sinful condition speeds, even when driving conditions are poor - the authoritative presence of a police car is needed to help all of us see sense and behave properly.

In today's gospel, Jesus uses the example of childlike trust and obedience to illustrate the nature of our relationship with the Father.

Obedience, to be fruitful, must be founded upon trust; a trust in the goodness and reliability and love of the one who calls for our obedient response.

In our personal lives we practice obedience to the inspirations that we find inside ourselves.

We are prompted to tell the truth, and not to lie.

We are prompted to get up and go to work, and not to be lazy.

We are prompted to be kind and considerate to other people.

We don't always follow these promptings, but we always recognize their value, and we feel we ought to obey them.

For, obey means to listen to the good, and then to do it.

But there is always the option of listening to the other voice.

We are never forced into good behaviour, it is always a choice.

Now, that we are no longer little children, obedience is not a matter of blindly doing what we are told - not even if it is God who is doing the telling.

It is about making the choice between good and evil.

It is about listening in our heart for what is the good, honest, and kind thing to do in our life, and then to do it.

It is about understanding the consequences of our actions and the effects that they will have on us and on other people.

It is about considering what sort of person we want to be, and then behaving accordingly.

It is about knowing and loving God and wanting not just to get as much as we can out of life, but to give generously within it as well.

In this way we become good, honest, and kind.

We grow to spiritual maturity, to spiritual greatness.

Even our religion has developed in ways that mean it is filled with loads of laws, and rules of life, commandments. Religion and the church have caused people to live fearfully, frightened of disobeying God.

Many people do labour and are overburdened by the ways of the church.

Jesus wants to give us relief from the things that would burden us and weigh us down.

And he wants us to know the spiritual freedom of learning from him - the one who lived more truly than any other in joyful obedience to God.

If you are looking for a role model, look no further than Jesus.

We need always to be renewed in the gentle spiritual ways of Christ.

It is for us, the people of Christ, to say to the people of the world, "Come to me, and I will give you rest.

My yoke is easy.

My burden is light."

Amen.

Are we listening to the good voice?

Are you spiritually mature?