

## FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEB. 14-15, 2026a

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time

### Gospel Reading

Mt 5:17-37

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.

Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place.

Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’

But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raqa,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna.

Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you,

leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison.

Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’

But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.

And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.’

But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

“Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.’

But I say to you, do not swear at all; not by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Let your ‘Yes’ mean ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ mean ‘No.’ Anything more is from the evil one.

### **Intercession**

May we respond to Christ’s call to lead lives of virtue, to follow his laws with grateful hearts, and seek ways to sustain the faith of others, such as supporting of the Catholic Ministry Appeal.

### **Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

Jesus certainly shook things up with his ministry. He declares, very clearly, that he is replacing the laws of Moses from the Old Testament with a new Law. Yet, Jesus, who was raised in a devoted Jewish family, also makes clear that he is not abolishing God’s laws but fulfilling them. As the Son of Man, he has the authority to deepen the laws Moses established. The new era that Jesus is ushering in holds believers to a higher standard than what the scribes and Pharisees practice.

Luckily, God doesn’t expect perfection from us. Though made in His image and likeness, we are human. Thus, we are flawed. Even though we fall short of living according to our Heavenly Father’s laws, our desire to try – our good intentions – please God. And through grace, the Lord provides the strength to follow the new commandments that Jesus sets forth in today’s Gospel. We just need to remember to call on God to be our help: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened” (Matthew 7:7-8).

We can be a channel of God’s love and mercy for others who are “asking,” “seeking,” and “knocking” when we support the ministries and programs that the Catholic Ministry Appeal makes possible.

### **Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Sometimes it is difficult to be told what to do. Our independent natures balk, and we question, “Why do I have to do this or don’t do that?” In today’s Gospel, Jesus isn’t just enumerating what we should and shouldn’t do. He is inviting us into a deeper understanding and relationship with him, one that extends beyond external adherence to the rules and legalese.

During Lent, we abstain from meat on Fridays. Why? Because this is what the Church dictates? Is it just another example of the hoops we jump through as Catholics? Not even close. It's much more beautiful. Foregoing steak on Friday is one *very small* way we can deny ourselves and experience the mortification Christ felt on the cross. It's an opportunity to more fully understand Jesus' sacrifice and appreciate his suffering on our behalf. It's so much *more* than "because the Church says so."

Lent is approaching. It is a time for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Let us prepare for this holy season by spending a few extra minutes a day in prayer, thinking of ways we can deny ourselves to better identify with the suffering Christ, and provide support to the Church's ministries and programs, like making a gift to the Catholic Ministry Appeal.

### **Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Jesus, with arms outstretched to welcome all.

Header: "Whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven." – Matthew 5:19

Copy: Jesus is The Way to the Heavenly Father. We can lead others to Our Father when we make his love and mercy known through a gift to the Catholic Ministry Appeal.