

The 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

By: Fr. Greg Ames

The words, feng shui were hardly known just a few years ago; and you are wondering whether feng shui is today's special at Mrs. Chows. It isn't. It is the ancient Chinese practice that desires harmony between people and their living space. It is a belief that the color of your room, the positioning of the furniture, the amount of metal influence the attitude and the well being of those who live in that room. In an article I read, the author said there are feng shui consultants who help you choose those things that bring harmony and good luck to your home. The position of the swing in the backyard or the color of the front door can make or break your job security or financial well being. Some realtors even use the principles of feng shui to make a house desirable. Said on realtor: *An unbalanced house reflects an unbalanced life. A staircase aligned with a front door allows the energy to come down the stairs and out the front door. A plant at the base of the stairs could help. The usual pile of sneakers on the stairs will probably not.*

Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus

I am not sure that our financial well being or health is influenced by a wall color or the position of the couch. I do believe that an unbalanced house reflects an unbalanced life. Today's readings—especially the Parable of the Two Sons—speak about the balance we need as disciples of Jesus in an often difficult, busy, and complicated world. No need for you to tear down the wall paper or move the bed. Just pay attention: THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS, THE ATTITUDE OF TWO SONS, THE ATTITUDE YOU EMBRACE.

THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS The people of his day were able to know the attitude of Jesus by more than his words: a look, the tone of his voice, a certain gesture. But we have his stories, his words, and his recorded actions reveal his attitude. Those who came into the presence of Jesus found an attitude that was open, gentle, generous, always other directed. Jesus balanced play, prayer, and service. He was not like the people Ezekiel spoke of; grumbling about fair-

ness, complaining and self interested, out of balance. Jesus' attitude always created balance.

THE ATTITUDE OF TWO SONS We again hear a parable found only in Matthew. The brilliance of Jesus' story is that we see ourselves in both brothers. We are the ones who make the promises: yep, count on me. I am going to be there, I am going to do it. And then we are no shows with all the supposed good excuses. And we are the ones who say you want me to do what? I have no time, do you realize how busy I am. But then we stop and think, how small that sounds, how completely out of balance, and we do the right thing. While he understands both brothers, Jesus concludes that at the end of the day he is not interested in explanations. He is interested in the daily choices.

THE ATTITUDE YOU EMBRACE In the last two weeks, the parables contained a character who is remarkably generous and forgiving. We are not told anything about the attitude of the father in this parable. If he is anything like most fathers, his love of the sons enables him to forgive their bad attitudes. And if he is God, then it is love that he offers so that they and we can become people not only of promises, but deeds.

What's out of balance in your life? Your time, your relationships, your work? In an older translation, a bit different from the new one we heard, Paul tells the Philippians, YOUR ATTITUDE MUST BE CHRIST'S. Let that be our prayer for the week. There is a lot about your life you cannot control, but your attitude, that you can control. Some of us need to create balance by quiet, listening, prayer; that's why you are impatient. Others need to offer more service to others; that's why we can be selfish. Still others need more time with their children (soccer field, football field, basketball court don't count) to get to really know them; that's why we have problem relationships. Our attitude must be one of both self nurturing, but also other directed. You may use the principles of feng shui to create balance in your house. But in your life, let it be by having the attitude of Christ.

READINGS OF THE WEEK

Ezekiel 18:25-28

Philippians 2:1-11

Matthew 21:28-32

September 28, 2014

靈 修 生 活

言 與 行

張 春 申 神 父

天國臨近是天主自由地、主動地在耶穌基督的生命中實現祂自己的救人計劃。耶穌一生便是報告與完成這個好消息，人類蒙受天主關注的喜訊。因此耶穌公開生活之初，便向當地呼喊說：「時期已滿，天主的國臨近了」，但是祂繼續說：「你們悔改，信從福音罷。」這表是祂要求人聽到了天國臨近的福音之後，應當立刻拿定主意信從；信從耶穌宣講的天國是真實臨近了，天主的救人計劃，真實地出現在自己面前了。

聖經中所謂的信從包括好幾層意義。當然最基本的是相信耶穌是天父派遣來的使者，祂所宣講的一切是真實的。不過信從福音同時要求生活的悔改與轉變。雖然耶穌在宣講時，向自己的人指出很多具體的要求，但是可以用瑪竇福音中的一句話綜合起來：你們應當是成全的，如同你們的天父是成全的一樣。這究竟要求些什麼呢？我們說過，天國臨近是天父在基督生命中實現自己對人類的憐憫、關懷、寬赦等等。於是信從天國臨近的讀者，必須在自己的生命中，對別人加以憐憫、關懷、寬赦。所以信從不只包括接受耶穌的宣講，而且應當改變自己的生活，實行耶穌的要求，如同天父一樣成全。這裡可以具體舉一個例子：耶穌說：「你們一向聽說過：你應愛你的近人，恨你的仇人！我卻對你們說：你們當愛你們的仇人，當為迫害你們的仇人祈禱，好使你們成為你們在天之父的子女，因為祂使太陽上升，光照惡人，也光照善人；降雨給義人，也給不義的人。」這是信從福音的人在實際生活行動中的要求，如同天父一樣成全。祂不排斥惡人，所以我們也應如同祂一樣愛仇，以及為迫害我們的仇人祈禱。總之，信從是應當在行動中表現出來的，不只是口中或心內的答應罷了。

對於信從天國臨近在實際生活行動中的要求說明之後，我們便可以相當容易地了解今天福音中的比喻了。第二個兒子，口中答應去工作，但是沒有行動。第一個兒子，雖然口中違命，可是後來悔改接受父親的命令去工作。我們都知道誰是真正奉行父親意願的人。同樣聆聽了耶穌傳報的福音之後，必須實行。因為耶穌自己說過：不是凡向我說「主啊！主啊！」的人就能進天國；而是那承行我在天之父旨意的人，纔能進天國。這是今天比喻的中心思想。不過福音中另外一段話也值得我們深思與反省。因為耶穌時代，那些自以為了不起的司祭長和民間長老，反而不相信。而那些受人輕視的稅務員和娼妓倒相信了。這叫我們在走天國道路上，不敢自恃，而要謙虛地實事求是，根據信仰而生活。

不是說：「主啊！主啊！」的人就能進天國，而是要承行天父聖意，才能進天國。

摘自「妙音送長風」

本 週 讀 經

二 零 一 四 年 九 月 廿 八 日

則 18:25-28; 斐 2:1-11; 瑪 21:28-32