

Homily ~ OT VI (A) > February 15, 2026.

Today's readings place before us a clear and urgent invitation to choose life. In the first reading from the Book of Sirach, we hear these powerful words: *"If you choose, you can keep the commandments... before man are life and death... whichever he choose shall be given him."* God does not force us. He respects our freedom. He places before us His law - not as a burden - but as a path to life.

For Israel, the Law, the Torah, was not merely a list of rules. It was loving instruction from a covenant God who desired their holiness and wholeness. It was the revealed will of a Father who cared deeply for His children.

In today's Gospel from the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus appears as the new Lawgiver. He does not abolish the Law given through Moses; He fulfills it and deepens it. He goes beyond external behavior and looks into the heart. You have heard that, "You shall not kill." But Jesus says that anger, hatred, and insults are already forms of killing in the heart. You have heard that, "You shall not commit adultery." But Jesus teaches that even a lustful look violates the dignity of another person. He speaks about divorce and false oaths, calling His disciples to integrity and faithfulness. In short, Jesus moves us from external compliance to interior transformation.

There is a story of a child who obeyed his mother's command to sit down. He sat down outwardly, but said, "I may be sitting on the outside, but I'm standing on the inside!" Sometimes our obedience to God can be like that - external, but not from the heart. Jesus calls us to sit down on the inside too - to align our hearts with God's will.

St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, reminds us that God's wisdom is deeper than human wisdom. It is revealed by the Spirit. The wisdom of the Cross teaches us that love, forgiveness, and self-control are stronger than anger, lust, or pride.

All these give us strong messages;

First, we are called to obey God's law based on two principles: reverence and respect. Reverence for God- His name, His day, His authority. Respect for others - their life, dignity, marriage, property, and reputation. Our obedience must flow from love and gratitude, not fear.

Second, we must learn to forgive and seek reconciliation quickly. As St. Paul says elsewhere, "Be angry, but do not sin." If we cling to anger, it poisons our hearts and even our bodies. When anger rises, let us pause, pray, and ask the Holy Spirit to help us see with the eyes of Christ.

Third, we are called to integrity. Let your "Yes" mean "Yes," and your "No" mean "No." In a world of half-truths and compromises, Christians must be men and women of truth.

Dear Ones, today God places before us life and death. May we freely and wisely choose life - by choosing love, reconciliation, purity of heart, and faithfulness. Moreover, may the Spirit help us not only to keep the law outwardly, but to live it inwardly, from the heart.