

We all have faults, weaknesses. I for one have a great many faults and am very loyal to every one of them. Now, I'm not going to "release" them here today since I've already made confessions of them to my priest-confessor.

But I do want to mention one and it is this: I have a very hard time in changing my mind. Worse, the older I am, the more difficult change becomes and the more I sinfully complain about it, more often to people than to God.

Some, if not many of us, can relate to change, whether it is changing our mind or changing our lives. We may feel like the poem by A.A. Milne, the creator of Winnie the Pooh:

*"When I was One, I had just begun.
When I was two, I was nearly new.
When I was three, I was hardly me.
When I was four, I was not much more.
When I was five, I was just alive.
But now I am six, I'm as clever as ever.
So I think I'll be six for ever and ever!"*

We are creatures of habit and we get comfortable very easily. We are people of conviction and cherish our free-will and power to choose. Therefore, we don't like to change. Sometimes this can be the real cause of our inability to trust.

The unavoidable truth is that there is no growth, faith or fulfillment worthwhile in this gift of God called life without change. To refuse to change is to refuse the best God has to offer us and our life.

C.S. Lewis, a Christian apologist and one of the most quoted authors on Twitter, once said, "No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good."

The Gospel for this Sunday should give us plenty to think about. It should give us flashbacks of our lives. “A man had two sons,” Jesus told the religious leaders. “He came to the first and said, Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.”

One said an immediate ‘yes’ to his father, but then changed his mind and never went. And the other said a definitive ‘no’ to his father, but later realized how bad he was, he changed his mind and went.

“Which of these two sons are you?”

Jesus asked the elders of the people and us, and warned those who may think they have no need to change:

“Amen I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you.”

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

Free-will is a great gift given us and it comes with great responsibility. What we choose to do, or not do, has consequences that are eternal and the effects are global. Nothing about this is new.

For instance, we have a choice to follow the new guidelines governing the reopening of businesses in the midst of the coronavirus. Failure to do so will result in another lockdown with more restrictions.

This is also true in the life of faith. There are people who believe that a truly holy life, a faithful life, a God-centered life, is a life lived between them and God, a life in which they get nearly everything right. Very few mistakes. Few missteps. Few moral failings. Few sins. And maybe there is a little bit of truth in that. I don’t want to minimize the importance of doing the right thing day-in and day-out. That really wouldn’t make much sense.

However, I would argue that a person of deep and authentic faith is not one who is convinced that he or she is living a life substantially pleasing to God only but also caring and loving to others beyond their immediate family and friends.

In other words, a truly holy person, a truly faithful person is someone who continually recognizes their own need for change, their own need for transformation, their own need to be more loving and giving. A faithful person is one who never really feels they have reached the finish line - but always has more to go.

My friends, the life of faith, yours and mine, is not about remaining the same. It's about being created anew each and every day. In a word, it's about change -- the kind of change brought about and founded on the realization that each of us can be and should be more than we were yesterday.

We don't like what we said to someone yesterday?

Say something kinder today.

We turned your back on someone in need yesterday?

Reach out to someone today.

We said no to something God asked of us?

Say yes . . . today and every day.

Change. Not something to fear. Not something to dread. Rather, a gift from God that we would be wise to embrace.

Let's start by changing the one thing God might want us to change the most -- our minds. Like the one son said no, but had the courage and wisdom to change his mind -- and faithfully chose to get on board with what his father had asked of him, may we may strive toward this same level of willingness, and change what we can, so all may live in holy joy and eternal truth as beloved sons and daughters of God and loving brothers and sisters of Christ. Amen.