

12 August 2026 - Wednesday of the <sup>19th</sup> week "B"

[Ezekiel 9:1-7; 10:18-22; Matt 18:15-20](#)

## Homily

When we see someone acting in a way that doesn't seem right to us, and especially when we think that someone has personally offended us or been unfair to us, we are easily led to set ourselves up as God's vigilantes -- rather like the exterminating angels in the vision of Ezekiel, which we had as our first reading. We are still living in the Old Testament, just like the prophet Elijah who slaughtered the 450 prophets of Baal before his encounter with God on Mount Horeb, or Paul leading the Christians to their death before his journey to Damascus. The message of Jesus is quite different.

Jesus shows us very clear steps to follow in the exercise of fraternal correction, which remains a requirement of the Christian life. If a brother has wronged us, the first thing to do is to go and talk to him about it, rather than making it public. If we make his fault public, we are sinning against him. If our brother listens to us, we have relieved him of the burden of his fault and everything ends there. If he does not want to listen to us, we are not yet authorised to make a public case of it. Instead, we must ask another brother to be a witness between us. If that doesn't work, then -- and only then -- should we involve the Church, that is, the community. And if he does not want to listen to reason, it is he who separates himself from the communion of brothers.

Let's pay special attention to what Jesus says here about the power to bind and loose. We are not talking here about the sacramental power of forgiveness of sins entrusted to the Apostles, since Jesus is speaking here to all his disciples. He simply means that when we forgive our brother, when we trust him and believe that he is better than what he has shown in this or that act, or in any case that he is capable of better things, we unbind him; we give him the capacity to be other and to grow. When, on the other hand, we refuse to forgive, when we believe that our brother cannot change and we identify him with the negative memory we have of him, then we prevent him from growing, we keep him tied to his past. This is a terrible power that we have, and one that Jesus warns us about.

The mention -- made at the end of the Gospel -- of the prayer made by two or three is not out of context. Indeed, it was the conviction of the Desert Fathers that when someone has sinned, he has strayed from God but can only receive the gift of conversion from God. He therefore

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needs his brothers, who have remained friends of God, to pray with him to obtain this grace.

So let us pray together, for one another, asking above all for the grace to be able to forgive and to untie each other from all the ties that prevent us from going happily towards God.

Armand Veilleux