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There was a lady walking through a Park and she thought she heard somebody following close behind her. She got a bit nervous, turned round and there was a young man. She said: 'Why are you following me'? He replied, 'because I am infatuated by you. I love you. I see you passing here every day. You are the most beautiful person I have every seen. And she said, 'But if you look behind you, you'll see my younger sister and she is much more beautiful than I am.' And he turned round quickly and there was no one there. And he turned to her and said 'are you mocking me?' And she answered, ' If you were sincere in what you said to me, you would not have looked around to find my younger sister.'

We can so easily become side-tracked in our following of Jesus. **There are people** who initially promise our Lord the earth but because of their fickleness, it turns out to be a hollow promise. **On the other hand** there are people with little or no exposure to God or religion in their early days but later find faith – just like the second son in the gospel today. You might have had a shaky faith-start in life but how you finish is what really matters.

We are told that during **WW11** the German Government set up radio signals in such a way that people could only receive one station, which continually pumped out their propaganda. All other stations were deliberately jammed.

We could be a bit like that when we use Our Lord's teaching selectively. We only tune into Gospel '**comfort stations**' but when our faith is tested we can so easily switch off the radio.

This could apply when couples on their wedding day promise to stay with each other until the end of their lives, but then something goes wrong and they go their separate ways. Some people think the church has gone soft on divorce. Well, it

hasn't, despite its prevalence in our culture. It undermines family life.

Also inconsistent with a couple's marriage vows is wilfully to withhold their fertility from each other in a selfish way. When that happens, their 'I do' to each other on the day of their wedding becomes an emphatic 'I don't'. When it comes to fertility it seems God made a mistake in the way He designed our bodies and we have to correct His mistake through artificial means. It usurps God's plan for marriage and contradicts the inner meaning of conjugal love.

A good example of a decisive yes to God was **Mary our Mother**. As a young person she acceded to become mother of God, saying to the Angel Gabriel, 'let what you have said be done to me'. Mary never went back on her Word despite the many obstacles she had to face. Jesus was particularly thinking of his mother when he said: 'blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it'.

*Today the Gospel **challenges us to be decisive** so that Our Lord can rely on us to be faithful, come what may. 'The person who stands firm to the end will be saved'.*