

## 26A

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. You are the most beautiful person I have every seen. And she said, 'But if you turn around 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. "Are you mocking me", he said. 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 in the cauldron of life those promises turn out to be hollow. **On the other hand** there are people with little or no exposure to God or religion in their early days but later find a lively faith – just like the second son in the gospel today. We may have had a wobbly faith-start in life but how we finish is what really matters.

We are told that during **WW11** the German Government controlled 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. Our philosophy of life will determine what channel we're tuned in to. When our faith is put to the test we might be tempted to change stations or switch off the radio altogether.

This could apply when, on their wedding day, couples promise to love each other for the rest of their lives. But then they don't live up to those promises and duly separate. Some people think the church has gone soft on divorce. Well, it hasn't, despite its

prevalence in our culture. It undermines family life and is the last thing children need.

Also inconsistent with the dignity of Christian marriage is when a couple mutually agree to withhold their fertility from each other for egocentric reasons. When that happens, the vows they made on their wedding day will sound a bit hollow. To artificially disable your fertility is saying that God made a mistake in the way He designed our bodies and we have to correct His mistake. St John Paul 11 says "it's a falsification against the inner truth of conjugal love". Another thing, when you turn off the fertility switch it doesn't always come on again when you want it to.

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. When she said 'yes' she meant 'yes'.

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