

**“...learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourself.”**

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**Once upon a time**, there was a fable about a contest between the sun and the wind. The dispute was over which one was the stronger. One day an opportunity arose to settle the dispute. A person dressed in a long overcoat was walking down a country road. The sun said to the wind:

**“Whoever makes the person remove the coat faster will win.”**

The wind not only agreed, but offered to go first. He blew & blew, but the more he blew, the tighter the person held onto the coat. Finally, exhausted, the wind gave up. Then the sun took over. It merely shone in all its glory. Within minutes, the person took off the coat.

**“What is the moral of the story,” you ask. Well, I am glad you asked that question!**

*The answer is: you can achieve more by gentleness than by violence.*

There was a time when the best compliment you could pay someone was to call him or her a **‘gentle person.’** The term ‘gentleman,’ testifies to this. Today, gentleness is not as highly regarded as it once was. Today, **violence** is more popular than **gentleness**. TV has given it a wide-spread audience, because it gets big, Nielson ratings. Action-movies are packed w. violence.

All of this has taken its toll on us. It is our dubious honor to have coined such expressions as **‘battered woman’** and **‘child abuse.’** Our own families reflect the violence of our age. We shout, kick things, throw things, punch things, and even strike one another.

**How very different from what Jesus taught us. Jesus said:  
“Learn from me, because I am gentle and humble of heart.”**

*The prophet Isaiah said of him:*

**“He will not shout or raise his voice or make loud speeches in the street. He will not break a bent reed nor put out a flickering lamp.”** Is.42:2-3

Look how Jesus handled the case of the woman caught in adultery. He was not only gentle with her, **BUT** also her self-righteous accusers. He didn’t shout & rave. He didn’t scream & yell. He simply bent over and, very gently, wrote in the sand with his finger. His action stood out like a clap of thunder in the silence of a warm, summer’s night.

He held up, for our imitation, the shepherd in the Parable of the Lost Sheep. He didn’t beat the sheep or drag it home. He placed it, gently, on his shoulders. Also, for our imitation, he held up the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The father didn’t shout or penalize his wayward son. He didn’t hassle him; he hugged him!

Today’s gospel contains an important invitation for all of us, self included. It invites us to learn from Jesus because he is **“gentle and humble of heart.”**

*Concretely, it means in the week ahead that:*

*We try to respond to people as the sun did in the fable, that is, with genuine warmth.*

**For example**, that we try to respond to those who wrong us... **the way Jesus did**... in the case of the lost sheep, the sinful woman, and as did the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Jesus taught us to respond to life with **‘gentle-understanding.’**

*I now close with this prayer:*

**Lord, during the week ahead, help us remember the lesson of the sun & the wind.**

**Help us remember the tenderness of Jesus, who said:**

**“Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart.”**

*May our ever-loving, gentle Abba, bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*