

COME TO ME – ALL

July 05th 2026

“The young people of today love luxury. They have bad manners, despise authority, and contradict their parents.”

Would you agree with that statement?

Perhaps some of you are thinking, “Well... that certainly sounds familiar.” Maybe you have heard similar words on television, read them in the newspaper, or even caught yourself saying something like that.

Surprisingly, this quotation is often attributed to the Greek philosopher Socrates, although historians debate whether he actually said these exact words.

Socrates lived about 470 to 399 years before Christ—roughly 2,400 years ago. Whether the quotation is really his or not, it tells us something important:

even in ancient Greece, people complained about “the younger generation.”

Apparently, human beings have not changed all that much.

And that is exactly why today's Gospel feels so surprisingly current.

The Gospel according to Matthew was probably written around the years 80 to 90 after Christ—nearly two thousand years ago. Yet when Jesus speaks, it sounds as if he is describing people today.

“We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.”

Jesus is describing people who are impossible to satisfy.

John the Baptist came fasting, living a life of discipline and simplicity. People said, “He has a demon.”

Then Jesus came eating and drinking, sitting at tables with ordinary people, celebrating life, sharing meals. And people said, “Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard.”

John was too strict.

Jesus was too welcoming.

No matter what God did, someone always found a reason to criticize.

And if we are honest, not much has changed.

We still judge quickly. We judge generations. We judge politicians. We judge our neighbors.

We judge people by the clothes they wear, the car they drive, the language they speak, the color of their skin, the mistakes they have made, or the opinions they hold.

Sometimes we even judge people before they have spoken a single word.

We are remarkably good at deciding who belongs—and who does not.

But then something beautiful happens in today's Gospel.

Jesus changes the subject.

He stops talking about the critics.

Instead, he begins talking about the heart of God.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

Did you notice that little word?

All.

Not some. Not the respectable. Not the successful. Not only those who have their lives together.

All.

That word is easy to read.

It is much harder to live.

Because if we are honest, there are people we would rather not sit next to.

What if someone walked through those church doors this morning who had obviously not showered for several days?

What if someone smelled strongly of alcohol?

What if someone had just been released from prison?

What if someone interrupted the service because they did not know how church works?

Or someone whose political opinions are completely opposite from ours?

Would we be happy to see them?

Would we welcome them as warmly as we welcome longtime members?

Or would we quietly hope they sit somewhere else?

Jesus says, "Come."

Not, "Come after you have cleaned yourself up." Not, "Come once you've learned the rules."

Not, "Come after you've become respectable."

Simply: **Come.**

Because that is how grace works.

Jesus never waited for people to become worthy before inviting them.

He met tax collectors before they repented.

He ate with sinners before they changed.

He touched lepers before anyone else dared to come near them.

He welcomed those whom everyone else had pushed aside.

That does not mean Jesus wanted people to remain as they were.

His love changes people.

But transformation always begins with welcome.

First comes the invitation.

Then comes new life.

And perhaps that is the challenge for the Church today.

Are we truly Christ's Church?

Or are we a club for people who already know how to behave?

The Church is not our house.

It is the Lord's house.

And if it is his house, then he decides who is invited.

And he has already decided.

Everyone. The tired. The lonely. The doubting. The addicted. The grieving. The successful.

The failures. The lifelong Christian. The person walking into a church for the very first time.

The one who smells like perfume. The one who smells like the streets.

All are invited. Because every one of us comes carrying something.

Some carry grief. Some carry guilt. Some carry fear. Some carry loneliness. Some carry burdens no one else can see. Behind every smiling face there is a story. And Jesus knows every one of those stories. That is why he says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Not because we deserve it.

But because that is who he is. The wonderful thing about this Gospel is that it has not become outdated. Two thousand years have passed. Empires have risen and fallen. Technology has changed beyond imagination. But the human heart is still the human heart. And Christ is still Christ. Still calling. Still welcoming. Still forgiving. Still giving rest. So perhaps the question today is not whether we agree with Socrates. Perhaps the real question is whether we agree with Jesus. Will we receive the invitation ourselves? And will we become a congregation where everyone else can receive it too? May this always be a place where every person who walks through these doors hears not our judgment, but Christ's voice saying:

"Come to me."

Amen.