

Eighth Sunday – Ordinary Time – Year C

Today's readings are unique – they seem like a series of unconnected proverbs –

- The blind leading the blind both fall in the pit
- Helping someone with a splinter in their eye while we have a beam in ours
- A rotten tree cannot bear good fruit

One wise saying after another that seem unrelated to the one before

But when we listen, there is a theme – perseverance, the importance of being faithful

Staying faithful improves us – no matter what we encounter

COVID – WAR – SICKNESS – no matter what,

Faithfulness to God is key to our becoming better people

Watch this – Sirach is also made up of several unrelated proverbs - but let's look at this one:

“The test of what the potter molds **is in the furnace.**

So **in tribulation** is the test of the just”

Two identical cups can be molded by the potter and put into the furnace

But yet one cracks while the other doesn't

The quality of the mold is only seen after its fired in the furnace.

What is your furnace? There can be many

Tribulation, trials, turmoil in life are the test of the just

In our life aren't we all tested, tried – hardened, like a pot in a furnace.

BONE CHINA is “fired” 7 times in kiln – it is delicate – but resilient

(drop it and it'll bounce)

How many times have you been fired?

It is in going through difficulty that we get strong – perseverance – there's wisdom in SIR

Gospel – Jesus uses 3 different examples to share this truth

Blind leading the blind

Splinter and the Beam

Trees and the fruit they bear

JC is condemning the Pharisees – leaders and teachers of Israel who have NOT been faithful

They're like blind leading the blind

They criticize and judge little things– yet they can't see clearly due to their own prejudices

They are rotten trees bearing rotten fruit

WHY

Caught up in their pride and arrogance they had not persevered in the faith

They were focusing so much on the nits of the law the people weren't hearing about the love of God

The love of God is the reason behind the law in the first place

Know this –

As God's beloved, its only by being faithful as Christian men and women can we improve

And this is where Lent comes in – Ash Wednesday is next week

The Church sets aside this time for us to take spiritual inventory and improve

HOW? That's up to you

Chocolate Cake versus DOING SOMETHING to improve

Don't miss this opportunity to become better

Use the next few days to get ready – to think about what you want to do

You CAN become the person God wants you to be.