

The Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 27, 2022
Our Lady of Perpetual Help

First Reading: Sir 27:4-7

When a sieve is shaken, the husks appear;
so do one's faults when one speaks.
As the test of what the potter molds is in the
furnace,
so in tribulation is the test of the just.
The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had;
so too does one's speech disclose the bent of
one's mind.
Praise no one before he speaks,
for it is then that people are tested.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16

R (cf. 2a) Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing
praise to your name, Most High, To proclaim
your kindness at dawn and your faithfulness
throughout the night.

R Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

The just one shall flourish like the palm tree,
like a cedar of Lebanon shall he grow.

They that are planted in the house of the
LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

R Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

They shall bear fruit even in old age;
vigorous and sturdy shall they be, Declaring
how just is the LORD, my rock, in whom
there is no wrong.

R Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

Second Reading: 1 Cor 15:54-58

Brothers and sisters:

When this which is corruptible clothes itself with
incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself
with immortality, then the word that is written shall
come about:

Death is swallowed up in victory.

Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is
the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the
victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters,
be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work
of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is
not in vain.

Alleluia Phil 2:15d, 16a

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Shine like lights in the world
as you hold on to the word of life.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel: Lk 6:39-45

Jesus told his disciples a parable, "Can a blind
person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a
pit? No disciple is superior to the teacher;
but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his
teacher. Why do you notice the splinter in your
brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden
beam in your own? How can you say to your
brother, 'Brother, let me remove that splinter in your
eye,' when you do not even notice the wooden
beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the
wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see
clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye.
"A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a
rotten tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known
by its own fruit. For people do not pick figs from
thornbushes, nor do they gather grapes from
brambles. A good person out of the store of
goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil
person out of a store of evil produces evil;
for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks."

The Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 27, 2022
Our Lady of Perpetual Help

INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

Jim Downing, a friend of mine, who has since died, tells of an Oriental fable about three horsemen who were traveling through the desert at night. *“Unexpectedly they were confronted by a mysterious person. The stranger told them that they would soon cross the dry bed of a stream. ‘When you arrive there,’ he declared, ‘get off your horses and fill your pockets and saddle bags from the river bed. At sunrise examine the stones you have picked up. You will be both glad and sorry.’*

“As the man predicted, the travelers came to a dry stream bed. In a spirit of adventure they put a few of the many stones they found scattered about, into their pockets. At sunrise the next day they examined the pebbles they had picked up. To their great astonishment they found the stones had been transformed into diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other precious stones. Recalling the statement of the stranger in the desert, they understood what he meant—they were glad for the pebbles they had picked up but sorry they hadn’t taken more.

We too, like the horsemen, are traveling through life, picking up stones and storing them in the pockets of our heart and mind. At the end of life’s journey, we too will be sorry or glad when we discover whether the stones we picked up are mere earth or eternally precious. This week’s Gospel reading indicates that we can get a glimpse into the future contents of these pockets by looking at the things our heart is producing now. Often it is our reactions that show what is stored there.

Much of life is thoughtful, contemplated action, wherein we determine what our response to life will be. However, occasionally, and for some frequently, we encounter the unexpected and have no time to think and act, but only to spontaneously react. Like a cup, brimming full of liquid, when it is jarred unexpectedly, whatever was put into the cup, will slosh out. So it is with these unplanned reactions. When life unexpectedly jars us, the language, attitudes, and behaviors that spill out, show us with what we are filled.

This passage also says that *“everyone when he is fully taught will be like his teacher.”* Jesus is the “master teacher,” and His life and words are pure gold, showing us who God is, how we are related to Him, and how we should relate to one another. Each of us who follows Him, desires to be like Him, and when life unexpectedly jars us, usually it is a good news, bad news situation. The good news is that five or ten years ago we would have reacted much worse. The bad news is that we still are not responding fully like Jesus would. But we have hope! For the promise of this passage is that when we are “fully” taught, we will be like our teacher. Let’s determine once again to purposely dismount from the busyness of our daily travels, to pause at the Master’s feet and pick up some precious spiritual stones.

“It can easily be shown from examples both in the Old Testament and the New that the Spirit changes those in whom he comes to dwell; he so transforms them that they begin to live a completely new kind of life.... Saint Paul writes: ‘As we behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, that glory, which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit, transforms us all into his own likeness, from one degree of glory to another.’ Does that not show that the Spirit changes those in whom he comes to dwell and alters the whole pattern of their lives? With the Spirit within them it is quite natural for the people who had been absorbed by the things of this world to become entirely other-worldly in outlook, and for cowards to become men of great courage.”—Cyril of Alexandria

The Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 27, 2022
Our Lady of Perpetual Help

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading

1. How do you feel when you read this passage?
2. What is the most helpful thing you have discovered to shape your mind and heart into Jesus' image?

Second Reading

3. How would you describe the "victory" in light of this week's reflection?

Gospel Reading

4. What is the difference between having good judgement and being judgmental?
5. How do we store treasures in our heart?
6. How do we empty our hearts of evil things that have been stored there, either purposefully or inadvertently?
7. Practically, what does "fruit" refer to in this passage?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.