

8th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year (C) March 2, 2025

Our Sunday Story:

His name is H. G. Wells. In the late 1800s, a boy was working in a London store. He had to rise at five o'clock each morning, sweep the store, and then work fourteen hours. He stood it for two years and then told his mother that he would kill himself if he had to continue. Following his talk with his mother, the boy wrote a depressing letter to a teacher he had in his earlier years. He explained how he was heartbroken and no longer wanted to live. What did the teacher do? The teacher praised him as a person and assured him that he was exceptionally gifted. To make a long story short, that letter of encouragement changed the boy's entire life. He became one of England's most successful writers, authoring nearly eighty books. His name is H. G. Wells. And so today's ***Gospel invites us to take a look at our general attitude. Are we people adding to the joy in our world by affirming and encouraging others? Or are we persons adding to our world's sorrow by constantly nagging and criticizing others?*** If we are this second kind of person, we need to take to heart the words of Jesus in today's Gospel and realize that by our negative attitude, we are destroying ourselves and those around us. (story by Fr. Mark Link S. J.)

The Sunday texts we listened to today—the Book of Sirach, St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, and Luke's gospel—draw our attention to practical points of Christian living and challenge us to use our words as Jesus Himself used his in his preaching and healing ministry—to heal, restore, and bring back life, joy, and hope.

The third and final section of Luke's Sermon on the Plain begins: And he told them a parable. There are four parables, three of which we read today. ***They are all about how to be a good disciple of Christ Jesus.***

As Christians, we should be courageous enough to live out our faith and grow in it, even with all our limitations and imperfections. A person who tries to live a godly life but often fails is not a hypocrite. A person who tries to fulfill their duty even when they don't feel like doing so is a real Christian. It is necessary and good to set aside our desires to do what needs to be done. It is not hypocritical to be weak in faith. However, it is hypocritical to put on religious behavior to gain the attention, approval, and admiration of others. Christ in the gospel tells us that our speech and actions reveal our true underlying beliefs, attitudes, and motivations. Deceptions will not last forever. Our hearts reveal itself in our speech and behavior.

Christ's Rules for Life and living are:

We are to love others, not to judge or condemn them.

No one except God is good enough to pass judgment.

Christ teaches us again that we have no right to criticize unless we are free of faults.

Never judge the other person because only God sees the whole picture.

Hence, only God has the ability, the right, and the authority to judge.

Our speech and actions reveal our underlying beliefs, attitudes, and motivations.

For Christians, our actions prove our faith in God – fine words cannot replace fine deeds.

Be courageous to live and grow in your faith, even with your limitations and imperfections.

If you try and fail in your faith life, don't give up - get up and try again.

“My imperfections and failures are as much a blessing from God as my successes and my talents, and I lay them both at His feet.” Mahatma Gandhi.

How will you want to grow your faith this LENT?

1. Actively join one Small Faith Group.
2. Daily Holy Communion – Power & Presence of Christ in us.
3. Accompany one new person into St Pius X weekend Mass this lent.
4. Consider volunteering in one of our ministries.
5. Join an online Lenten Reflection App – like Loyola Press,
6. Join The Bible in a Yr with Fr. Mike Schmitz,
7. **Formed. Org** has covered you with everything you may need for your spiritual growth.
8. The Rosary is both a spiritual path and a weapon of protection.
9. Participate in the Social Justice sessions with Judiann McNulty: This is a five-week retreat at the fellowship hall starting March 6th at 6:45 PM. Judiann did this program in the Diocese of Helena last year, so it is great that she accepted to do it for us here. Judiann attends Saturday evening mass. See more info in the bulletin.
10. **Stations of the Cross Fridays** of Lent @ 6:00 PM, followed by a simple meal of soup & bread.

Lord, give us the courage to make this an Intentional Lent. Amen.