

Homily
Friday of the 2nd Week of Lent
March 1, 2024

Can you think of a story about your past that truly describes you and reveals a lot about yourself? Do you often share this story with others while fondly remembering the event as if it was yesterday? How much have you grown since then; how much have you matured, grown wiser, developed as an adult and a Christian. Or are you the same person? Do people really change? Can people really change?

My favorite personal story is when I met my wife for the first time. I was immature and stupid. I only saw the physical attributes of an attractive woman. I was selfish and only wanted what I thought was best for me and my wants and desires. I thank God every day for the Holy Spirit Who inspired me to stay with my future wife. She saw in me what I didn't see in myself; my potential. Nearly 35 years later, I'm still trying to meet that potential.

Isn't that what God wants of all of us? He made us good and He made us with a free will, to choose according to our wants and desires. And He sent His only Son to set us free from our disordered wants and desires in favor of being perfect, as our God in heaven is perfect. And God takes our disordered desires and manages to make something good come out of it.

Isn't it like the brothers of Joseph from our first reading? Joseph's brothers were envious of him. They chose to dispose of Joseph. They embraced their disordered view of their family. And God made something great come of it. Not only did Joseph being sold into slavery result in his family being saved in the coming famine, but it also led to the Exodus and being led into the promised land. It eventually led to King David which eventually led to Jesus, our perfect and eternal Lord, Savior and King.

God always makes something good come from treachery and catastrophe. God always has a plan in which we participate. God wants us to be with Him for eternity, but it's up to us, free to choose according to our will. We are also living in a disordered world with others who choose according to their own will. And sometimes that makes things difficult for us. And God calls us to embrace those events, forgive those who wrong us and praise and glorify God in all things.

The chief priests and elders received a lesson in the parable from Jesus in today's Gospel. Did they learn their lesson? Will we learn our lesson? We are the tenants. We are given many gifts from our God. And we are called to use these gifts for the benefit of our brothers and sisters. And we often use these gifts instead for our own benefit because sometimes we are selfish, immature and stupid.

But our God is a merciful and forgiving God. Jesus is our perfect Brother Who takes on our sins and feeds us with His very Body and Blood. We are called to take the gifts God has given us and, in our free will, choose to love God and our neighbor in this world so that we can be with God and all the angels and saints enjoying the peace of heaven where Jesus craves for us to join Him. Can we change? It is our choice.