



23rd SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME **YEAR C – September 8, 2019**

Some years ago, a friend of mine sent me advice on how to be the perfect pastor and how to get rid of your pastor if he is not perfect.. Here's what he wrote:

“The results of a computerized survey indicate that the perfect pastor preaches exactly 15 minutes. He condemns sin but never upsets anyone. He works from 5 AM until Midnight and is also the janitor. He makes \$50 a week, wears good clothes, buys good books, drives a good car, and gives about \$50 a week to the poor.

He is 28 years old and has been preaching for 30 years. He makes 15 calls each day, (Sundays included) on parish families who have problems, shut-ins who can't get out and the hospitalized who may be actively dying. He is always in his office - 24-7.

If your pastor does not measure up, simply send this letter to six other parishes that are tired of their pastor too. Then bundle up your pastor and send him to the church at the top of the list. In one week, you will receive 1,643 pastors, and one of them should be perfect.

Have faith in this letter and be sure not to break the chain! One church broke the chain and got its old pastor back in less than three weeks.”

Some food for thought on pastors. The scriptures today have food for thought for all of us, including those who are not pastors.

In the book of wisdom (Wisdom 9:13-18B), God asks an interesting question. He says, “Who can conceive what the Lord intends?” What is God's will for you? How often do you think about it? How often do you pray about it?

In the Gospel today (Luke 14:25-33), Jesus tells his disciples, “Anyone who does not renounce “all his possessions” cannot be my disciple”. Does he say that to all of us or is it meant to be applied only in the context in which it was given? Clearly Jesus does ask some people to renounce all their possessions, but he does not ask all people to renounce all possessions.

He does ask all of us to share what we have with those who don't have enough - through no fault of their own. There are so many ways to do that and only you can decide how you will do it. Some people have stopped giving in the Sunday collection because of the crimes committed by priests and bishops. That doesn't adversely affect those who committed the crimes, but it does adversely affect some poor folks who did not commit the crimes.

Basically, when all is said and done, if you want to be a disciple of Jesus you must seek to serve others rather than be served by them. You don't have to be ordained to do that and you don't have to give up all your possessions to do that. You do have to make some decisions that are not always easy to make. You have to decide between your own needs and wants and how you can help to meet the legitimate needs of others.

Reflect today on how you have done that in the past and decide today, on how you will do that in the future.