

## Homily of Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C, 2022

Jeremiah 17:5-8; Psalm 1:1-4, 6; 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20; Luke 6:17, 20-26

It is a fact that every choice has its effect. Good choice brings good effect and bad choice brings bad effect. In the first reading, Jeremiah prophesied to the people of Judah what would happen to them if they continued in their sin of idolatry and trusting in human allies. He, also, prophesied the blessings they would receive from God if they trusted in God:

*"Cursed is the one who trust in human beings, who seeks his strength in flesh, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a barren bush in the desert that enjoys no change of season, but stands in a lava waste, a salt and empty earth" (Jeremiah 17:5-6).*

*"Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord. He is like a tree planted beside the waters, that stretches out its roots to the stream. It fears not the heat when it comes; its leaves stay green; in the year of drought it shows no distress, but still bears fruit" (Jeremiah 17:7-8).*

The people of Judah did not listen to Jeremiah. They continued their sin of idolatry. Their king, Zedekiah, and his officials allied with Egypt; thereby seeking strength in flesh and turning away from the Lord. The result was that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem, and carried Judeans into exile. Good choice begets good result. Bad choice begets bad result.

There is no doubt that many things are beyond our choice or control; but someone says that largely, we are our choices. Where things are beyond our choice or control still provide opportunities for our choice. As people of faith, in all circumstances and in every choice, let us, prayerfully, be guided by the word of God and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. There are, also, times we need to seek the counsel of the wise to guide us in the process of discerning the good choice to make, or the bad choice not to make (Tobit 4:18, Proverbs 19:20).

Today, we are invited to reflect over our life to see the effects of the choices we have made or we are making. If the effects bring glory to God and love and peace to oneself and other human beings, that is the sure sign that the choices are good. We are encouraged to make such choices. But if the effects do not glorify God, and do not bring peace and love to oneself and other human beings, that is the sure sign that the choices are bad. We are encouraged to desist from such choices.

Today's gospel are Jesus' words of blessings, consolation, and encouragement to the poor (those who are the humble), to the hungry (those who desire and pursue righteousness); to the weeping (those who are deprived of justice); and to the hated, insulted, excluded, and denounced on account of the Son of Man (those who are persecuted for standing for truth, and those persecuted for their faith in Jesus). "Blessed are you." "You will be satisfied." "You will laugh."

On the other hand, Jesus denounces those who enrich themselves and live wasteful life with what belongs to others; the hypocrites, and the oppressors of the poor, the weak, and the just. Jesus pronounces curses on them: "Woe to you." "You will be hungry." "You will grieve and weep." Prophet Isaiah says, "Happy the just, for it will go well with them, the fruit of their works they will eat. Woe to the wicked! It will go ill with them, with the work of their hands they will be repaid" (Isaiah 3:10-11).

The second reading was St. Paul's caution to some Corinthians who did not believe in the resurrected Christ. In the same manner, nowadays, God's word is mocked, rationalized, rejected, dismissed, not believed, and God's messengers and believers of the word are persecuted. Nowadays, in the face of our corrupt and violent world, it is difficult to convince many people to remain righteous. For us believers, the readings and reflection encourage us to keep making choices which bring glory to God and well-being of humanity, and continue to persevere in our faith and in good work. "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9). Amen.

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