

**EIGHT SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, FEBRUARY 27, 2022,  
YEAR C.**

**BY THEIR FRUITS, YOU SHALL KNOW THEM**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters,**

**This Sunday's gospel continues the reading from the sermon of our Lord. "A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit." (Luke 6:43). The first reading from the Book of Sirach said the same thing in different words. "The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had; so too does one's speech disclose the bent of one's mind." (Sirach 27:6). Our actions and words reveal who we are. What can we do so that our words and actions shall correspond to who Jesus calls us to be?**

**Christ Jesus called and sent each one of us to go and bear fruit that would last. The kind of fruit you produce reveals whether you are true to the calling or not. Our mission is the salvation of all peoples and our identity is Jesus Christ as revealed in the beatitudes. If your lives radiate a life of trust in God, mercy, compassion, care and love for the poor, peace, purity, cleanliness of heart, humility, and hunger for holiness, then you are true to Jesus. If not, the Lord says plainly that we must turn a new leaf.**

**You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set**

**on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father (Matthew 5:14-16).**

**Being a disciple of Jesus comes with responsibilities and blessings. First and foremost, we must be ready to listen to the Lord. We must say and mean this, "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will." (Psalm 40:8). The Lord says, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven." (Matthew 7:21). It is always a temptation for one to do one's own will rather than that of the Lord. This temptation must be resisted because when we do not listen to the Lord and do our own wills instead, we spoil the work of God, says Mother Theresa of Calcutta .**

**In the day-to-day work of disciple making and contact with your brothers and sisters whom you desire to lead to God, our Lord calls you to put your houses in order first. In order to be a good role model or a guide, get rid of any blindness or blind spot that may cloud your vision. Such blindness could be prejudice, anger, bad habits or anything like that. It is just like in therapy; a therapist goes through counseling before he begins to help others. Does it mean that you have to be perfect before you can evangelize? No, it means you must make a serious effort to root out anything that will interfere with a wholehearted service in love to your neighbor. How can you know or see what must be**

**rooted out? You must listen to the Lord. Look at the mirror of his words. Take care of the wooden beam in your eye so that you can see clearly to help your brother and sister to be on the right path.**

**What is the benefit of listening to God and of bearing good fruit? It blesses you and blesses the world. The Word of God says, "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." (1 Corinthians 15:58)."**