

Have you ever experienced ingratitude on the part of individuals that you have helped succeed, simply because you sincerely cared for them, but who have instead turned their back on you?

This Sunday first Reading from Isaiah 5:1-7 describes the loving care God continually showed the people of Israel (symbolized by the vineyard) from whom He expected see "good fruits of justice": honesty, fidelity to God's Laws, love of God and neighbour, worship of the true God, etc. Instead He saw people who had a total disregard for His commandments and for neighbours, idolatry and immorality, ingratitude.

WHAT ABOUT US? Do we know that all the good things we have and enjoy come from God's love for us? How do we respond? If we look closely at the various events in our life up to the present, we see joyful and sorrowful moments, successes and failures, and like in the well known poem "FOOTPRINTS", we realize that at our lowest moments in life, the good Lord was always there to carry us. We will notice that God has intervened in the most unexpected ways: everything has worked out for our greater good and to our benefit.

During my younger years, I personally experienced God's providential care when I had to quit my job on account of low wage, and hoped to find a better one that would enable me to support my family and pay the bills. It was a low moment in my life. Only later on in life I acknowledged that God was always in control and was taking care of me. In fact God provided a better job, and He also put good Priests on my path so that my spiritual health was also cared for.

I know that God has been faithful to his love for me; therefore He expects that I produce good spiritual fruits: how have I responded to His love? Have I loved Him back in my neighbour? Do I take care of the poor and less fortunate? Do I pray for all God's children, who are my brothers and sisters?

What about you? Have you seen God's goodness present in your life? Have you produced fruits of gratitude and love?

"GOD IS BOTH REFUGE AND STRENGTH FOR US, A HELP ALWAYS READY IN TROUBLE; SO WE SHALL NOT BE AFRAID THOUGH THE EARTH BE IN TURMOIL." (Psalm 46).