

In Retrospect Fourteenth Week in Ordinary Time Wednesday, July 10, 2019 **Gn 41:55-57; 42:5-7a, 17-24a; Mt 10:1-7** (Look into the rearview mirror and see how God's providence was working, even through your own mistakes and your failures and even the malice of your enemies.)

We will continue this morning our reflections on the Book of Genesis and the story of **Jacob** and now his very important son, Joseph. There is a gap of course between yesterday and today. Yesterday we left Jacob as a very young man having simply crossed into Canaan. Now he is an old man; he is not even in the story, but he is there through **his sons**, who meanwhile had been up to a great deal of mischief. **They sold their own brother**, as you know the story of Joseph, **into slavery. He went through various episodes moving from being a prisoner to becoming grand vizier of Egypt.**

Now all this is for a reason; that's the whole point. **God in no way inspired those brothers to sell this brother into slavery.** That was not inspired by God, and yet, and this is the point, and **yet God uses even this malicious act for the good of the people**, and not only the people chosen, that is, the family of Abraham, but **indeed all people.** That's the whole idea. Abraham was to be a blessing for all nations, not just for Israel. In fact Israel didn't exist in the day of Abraham. Israel is a name given to his descendants and their covenanted clans, tribes. But God's plan was never simply to bless one group. **From the very beginning it was to bless all nations through this one group.** And this is now trying to explain or describe how this takes place.

So Joseph was sold into slavery, but **because of the extraordinary charisms that Joseph had, gifts from the Spirit, he was able to rise up.** First of all, he was able to help people. He interpreted dreams, for example. This brought to bear tremendous knowledge otherwise they wouldn't have had. And so eventually **he becomes the grand vizier of Egypt in charge of food.**

Now again, **because of dreams he realized that there would be a great famine, so he prepared for it.** Now not only do his brothers come to get food, but the whole world it says is coming. Now “whole world,” read in Middle Eastern mentality means the whole Middle East. There was no one there from China, you can be sure, or India. But **they were coming from the Middle East to this breadbasket of Egypt,** and fortunately they have saved a lot from the previous seven years of prosperity. **So through Joseph all nations are now being fed.** Joseph is Jacob’s son, Abraham’s grandson, so that the promise is now being fulfilled in actual fact. That’s the whole idea. This is the model of what God intends. **God intends the chosen people to feed the world, yes. God intends the chosen people to prosper the world, to bring about well-being everywhere. That is the mission from the beginning.** We are talking the Book of Genesis.

And Jesus brings all that into even a deeper development because the well-being now is not only food for the stomach, but **with Christ it’s food for the whole person, and especially the body, the blood, the soul, and the divinity of Christ, who is God.** So **this mission continues in our own day. We cannot afford to exempt anyone from the blessings that God has ordained in Abraham. All are included.** And in retrospect—in retrospect and only in retrospect—**only looking in the rearview mirror can we see how God provides, that is, how the providence of God actually works.** This book of course was written through the rearview mirror. Sometimes you should try that with your own life. **Look into the rearview mirror and see how God’s providence was working, even through your own mistakes and your failures and even the malice of your enemies.**