Saturday 29th Week of The Year - Year II

Luke 13:1-9

When something terrible happens, we often ask: “Why?” Sometimes, beneath that question, lies another: “What did they do to deserve it?”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus challenges that way of thinking. The people killed by Pilate, and those who died when the tower fell at Siloam, were no more sinful than anyone else. Their suffering was not evidence that God had singled them out for punishment.

That matters when we sit beside someone who is grieving, or receive frightening news ourselves. We do not have to add the burden of imagining that God is settling a score.

But Jesus also turns our attention towards our own lives. Rather than judging someone else’s relationship with God, we are invited to look honestly at our own. Where do I need to change? Is there someone I need to forgive? An apology I keep putting off? A person who needs more of my time?

Then comes the fig tree.

The owner sees a tree that has produced nothing. The gardener sees something still worth tending. Give it another year, he asks. Let me dig around it and feed it.

Perhaps we sometimes look at ourselves as the owner looks at that tree: “By now, I should be better than this. Why am I still struggling with the same things?”

The gardener offers another possibility. Growth may require patience, care and help. God’s mercy gives us room to begin again.

Yet the invitation is for today. We need not postpone the small act of love, the difficult conversation, the return to prayer.

The parable ends without telling us whether the tree bears fruit. We are left standing beside it, hearing the invitation.

What might begin to grow in us if we accepted God’s care - and took one small step towards change today?