The Third Thursday of the Great Fast
Monsignor Judson M. Procyk

"Everyone who listens to these words of Mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall; it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of Mine and doesn’t act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell, and what a fall it had!"

Matthew 7:24-27

In this parable, Jesus is telling us two things about life. One is to expect storms, and the other is that we can withstand them. There is no way to predict when they will come, but we can be absolutely certain of their coming. Life can be beautiful, and this is the aspect that we choose to emphasize most of the time. But wisdom requires that we recognize another truth, namely this: that life can become difficult and devastating almost beyond belief.

That is not theory; that is observation. I have seen it happen and so have you. Sometimes it is far away, and we read of it in the newspaper. Sometimes it is close to home, and we observe it with our own eyes. But whether it be near or far, usually we think of trouble as that which happens to someone else; and to a large extent this is true. The storms of life are always blowing somewhere; but for the most part, we just read about them or hear about them.

But the someone elses to whom trouble happens are real people just like you and me. They, too, thought themselves somehow exempt until one day the storm hit their house. Theirs was the heart that was broken; theirs was the life that was reeling. And they found themselves wondering, “Can this really be happening to me?”

What you and I must realize is that trouble is no respector of persons. It comes without warning or invitation, and no life is exempt. Jesus Himself felt the full impact of the storm. He knew what it was to experience loss and suffer pain. Jesus was telling us that in this life we should expect some storms.

But the second thing He is saying is that we can withstand them. You and I can build that kind of life. Jesus has drawn up the plan, and along with it comes a guarantee. He gives the assurance that anyone who takes His truth and puts it into practice can withstand the storms. We cannot control what life does to us, but we can determine our response. With the help of the Carpenter of Galilee, we can put a foundation under life that rain, and wind, and flood cannot destroy. The storms are sure to come, but don’t be afraid; you can withstand them.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Isaiah 12:10 - 12:2
Genesis 7:11 - 8:3
Proverbs 10:1-22