

Homily for Sunday Mass
March 3, 2019
Year C 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Luke 6:39-45
----Father Michael Grant George Cadotte----

A young couple (Jane and Joe Shmuckatellie) moved into a new neighborhood. The next morning while they are eating breakfast, the young woman (Jane) saw her neighbor hanging her wash to dry. "That laundry is not very clean," she said. "She doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better laundry soap." Her husband looked on, but remained silent. Every time her neighbor hung her wash to dry, the young woman (Jane) repeated her observations about the dirty laundry.

About one month later, the woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband (Joe): "Look, she has learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this?"

The husband (Joe) said, "I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."
(unknown)

"It seems rather ironic that one of the greatest gifts we have as humans, the gift of speech, is the one that often gets us into the most trouble!" (Dr. Lanie LeBlanc, OP)
This great gift, and potential weakness, are precisely what we need to hear today in the eight Sunday in ordinary time and the last Sunday before we enter into the season of Lent. Both our readings from the Book of Sirach as well as Luke's Gospel center on the importance of speech and how it can both lift up humankind as well as sink it.

Book of Sirach

In our first readings we are reminded of the well-known analogy of the fruit tree, "...the fruit of a tree shows the care it has had; so too does one's speech disclose the bent of one's mind." (SIR 27:6)

The theological writers Carol and Dennis Keller put it this way, "God provides all humanity with the incomprehensible gift of life. It is as though that gift is a seed from which grows a plant. Whether that plant is a gift to the world or only a weed, depends on the care that seed exercises as it grows. Does that plant absorb the nutrients, the water, and the sunlight of its environment? If so, it belongs; it has value; it demonstrates its magnificence."

This is a strong lesson to remind us that we are a gift from God, but we have control on how we grow and develop our lives, that gift of the seed of life, and not to foul ourselves into thinking we may be something we are not. We can, from a distance, appear to be a great person, a magnificent tree that provides a sense of grandeur as well as shade and sustenance to those around us. But if, upon

Homily for Sunday Mass
March 3, 2019
Year C 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Luke 6:39-45
----Father Michael Grant George Cadotte----

closer examination, we find the tree infested with disease and poor fruit then we are a shame. We are not what we appear to be in life but rather what we produce in life or the lack there of.

Gospel of Luke

This brings us to our Gospel reading from St. Luke and that pesky log in our eyes. Here we are being reminded again that not only do our actions (our fruits) truly tell who we are but also what we say. They say that the eyes are the windows of our soul, well that may or may not be, but our words are truly the windows into our heart, our faith, or true devotion and acceptance of Jesus Christ as our God and Savior.

Without prayer, and a true inward monitoring of our life to review how we are acting and feeling we can really be fooling ourselves. Take time and review your day and give thanks to God for the good you did, the kind words and even thoughts you had. Also, take time to acknowledge what you did not do well. The actions you took or failed to take. The words that came out of your mouth or resonated inside your heart and bring them to God for forgiveness. Repent and pray that God will help you be stronger, better, and more centered the next go around. To reduce the size of that darn log stuck in your eye and to produce a better fruit.

If this may sound a smidge familiar, then I would simply smile and give you a moment to think back at the start of Mass and the part we call the Penitential Rite. This is the moment, the time, and the place where you should have taken an account of poor fruit you have been producing and the fixation on your neighbor's ocular splinters and not your own. It is also the time, when we have had such failings, to recall Msgr. Harry's homily of last week and Jesus' call to even love and forgive your enemies. It was the time to repent and receive the forgiveness of God.

I love our readings today as they perfectly set up what comes next in our church life – Lent. We should always be taking time to review our actions and the value of our gift to the world, but as we approach the start of Lent this week won't you please consider a doubling down of this sort of self-evaluation? First, start with meditation and prayer and find some areas in your life where you are falling short and acting like the Shmuckatellies all too fixated on judging their neighbor's laundering skills. This is difficult and the evil one will work hard to increase that eye-log to epic size so you cannot see your wrongful ways. The call is to love and cherish all life, at all times and not just some parts of it while discarding or minimizing other parts.

Homily for Sunday Mass
March 3, 2019
Year C 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Luke 6:39-45
----Father Michael Grant George Cadotte----

Next, you can begin working with God, in meditation and prayer (our Monday Taize service at 7pm would be the perfect place to achieve this) to turn away from these actions and behaviors and continue to build a better you. God certainly wants this and trust me, the people you may be nattering and judging surely will appreciate it as well.

There is an old maxim in the professional cleaning world that says, "today it is a stain, smudge, or smear, but tomorrow it belongs there." Let us all take time during Lent to self-examine our thoughts, words, and actions. Let us look for the stains and smudges in our life that we have allowed to exist, and possibly thrive, to the point that we don't even see them anymore, and prayerfully work to eradicate them in our life. Let us break away from the poisonous roots of our many sinful acts during Lent and bring new life and resurrection to our moral selves and a new and even stronger faith in God. I cannot think of a better way to give thanks and praise to Jesus Christ and his teachings, sacrifice, and gift of life we recall during Lent and Easter.

AMEN