

The Log and the Speck  
February 27, 2022, Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Gospel of Luke 6:39-45  
Fr. John

I always enjoy the use of hyperbole - the art of making an over-statement or exaggeration in order to make a point. One of my favourite scriptural ones is that which Jesus uses in today's gospel: 'let me take out the speck in your eye when I don't see the log in my own eye.' I even have to chuckle a little bit when I try to envision what a big log would look like in a human eye.

However, Jesus wasn't just joking when he make that statement. He was observing a tendency which most of us fall into whenever we see and try to correct a flaw in another person and are oblivious or in denial of that which is in ourselves.

This is not to deny the role of a parent, teacher, or mentor who is trying to assist a child, a student, or even a peer confrere in making a good choice or decision. After all, any wisdom we might have to convey usually comes from what we have learned from **our own past mistakes.**

We have to be humble enough to admit that, in many cases, our vision of life can be very peripheral - focussing on the trivial and missing the obvious. It also implies that we sometimes judge that our own way of seeing or understanding is the **only** way - something we refer to as 'tunnel vision.'

A good example of that is the way Catholics view the Mass - the Eucharist. Does it represent a meal [i.e. the Last Supper] or a sacrifice [Christ's death on the cross]? Is it about changing the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord or does it have something to do with changing the hearts of those who attend? Is it a private devotion or shared public prayer? Is it a reminder of what God through Jesus has done for us in the past or is it a call for us to put into action in our own time what he taught and modelled. The answer, of course, is: **All of the above!** And perhaps, even more than that.

Whenever, we only take a slice of that as the only acceptable understanding then we fall prey to the narrowness for which Jesus condemned the Pharisees.

St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians states that the power of sin is the law, that is the Mosaic law that had it's core in the 10 Commandments. Jesus certainly wasn't condemning the Law but rather the attempt to make it a god unto itself.

Jesus was God's desire to win our hearts not to make us merely subservient to laws and rules. Do the words which come out of our mouths convey that - especially to our young people? Or are we too busy criticizing them for not coming to Church when we ourselves are not sure why we come ourselves?

Next week we begin the season of Lent and once again it is an opportunity to examine where we are in our relationship with God, with others and with life itself. Fr. Brad and I will be using the 12 step program for recovering addicts as the basis of our homilies during that time. You can find an introduction to that in this week's bulletin. It is our hope that this recovery process that has been used for decades by Alcoholics Anonymous will provide us with a spiritual pathway for a deeper conversion in which we allow God to remove the logs in our eyes so that we better walk with and humbly and lovingly remove the specks in each other's eyes.