Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Sirach 27: 4-7

Psalm 92

1Corinthians 15:54-58

Luke 6:39-45

What plank? What wooden beam in my eye? I can see very well thank you very much. I can see well enough to call a spade a spade. I can see well enough to assess what is in another’s heart. I can spot a diamond in the rough. I am willing to use a club on anyone who disagrees with me.

Lent starts this week on Ash Wednesday. Most of us will ask for ashes to mark us as Christians with the mark of ashes on our foreheads. What if we let those ashes fall into our eyes? What will we see? Those floaters in our eyes that usually we don’t pay a mind to. What if those floaters irritate us enough for us to take a second look at them? We’ll have forty days to clear our vision.

What could be floating around in our eyes could reflect the blind spots in our hearts and souls? Let’s see. There could be prejudices, criticisms, irrational judgements and condemnations. Lent is a time of humility when we try to purify how we perceive the world, how we look at those around us. Lent is a time when we see those things in our hearts that distort our vision of our world and the people in it.

How do we go about it? Well a good practice is to look at scripture and let it speak to us. If we re-read our First Reading, what if we shake our heads and see what sort of chaff falls out, chaff that colors our speech? Blue words that color our speech inappropriately? What sort of green ware do we have as thoughts? Do we test them with a fact check or just go with what we see on You Tube or Facebook? Do we tender care for good intentions? Foster their growth so that they multiply in our minds? Do we listen to people without prejudice until we assess what comes out of their mouths?

Or listen to preachers that refine our Christian way of thinking? We have those Ecumenical Services coming up on the Wednesdays of Lent at noon. They will help us reflect on God’s will and our inadequacy, God’s will and our dreams, God’s will and our identity, God’s will and our world view, and God’s will and our response. Food for thought, Christian thought.

Our parish retreat will run for three nights, March 25 to 27. The speaker Thomas Smith will encourage us as people of the parish with a journey through word, worship and works of mercy.

All these avenues will lead us to incorruptibility and immortality, praise the Lord. They will help us get rid of the thorn bushes and brambles that can choke the goodness out of ourselves. They will help us stay firm in our faith, steadfast and fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord our work will not be in vain.

Our Church invites us to reflect on what fills our hearts by examining the hopes and desires that motivate us. Then let us in all humility produce good fruit for our sake, for God’s sake.