

## Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Reading 1: [Sirach 27:4-7](#)

[Psalm 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16](#)

Reading II: [1 Corinthians 15:54-58](#)

Gospel: [Luke 6:39-45](#)

Readings may be found on the US Bishop's website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/022722.cfm#main-content>



The Gospel selection concludes our reading of the Luke's "Sermon on the Plain." (There is another comparison that is not included in the Sunday reading using the image of building on a foundation.) Jesus offers three comparisons for consideration. The first regards the blind trying to lead the blind. In life, one who cannot see runs the same risk as the person who follows. Both could fall into danger. Jesus applies this to those who want to lead and teach others. If one does not know the truth, one cannot teach the truth. The proverb, "A little knowledge can be a dangerous thing" can be applied here as well. Jesus challenges the disciples to learn from him. Jesus is the source of truth and as Jesus spent time with God in prayer, disciples need to spend time with Jesus to learn the whole truth rather than taking a part of the truth and making it an absolute or distorting it.

The second comparison that Jesus makes is about judging others when one is blind. If one can only see the truth partially, then one should not be criticizing others. While the image is shocking, it aims to challenge each person to look at his or her blindness before speaking about the blindness that someone else manifests. Last week's reading included the command, "Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned."

The third image that Jesus presents is that of fruit trees. If a tree is weakened or diseased, it does not bear good fruit. The same is true of people. A person who has an evil orientation will manifest evil speech and action. A person, whose life is based on goodness and truth, will speak and act in ways of goodness.

The selection from the Book of Sirach also cautions about following a person who presents a good image but who has not expressed their true beliefs. Looks and reputation do not mean a person is living a life of honesty and integrity. This has been unfortunately manifest in recent years through the unveiling of actions by leaders that caused harm through violence, abuse, or manipulation.

One's words, deeds, and lifestyle should be consistent. There are many inconsistencies shown between the words some speak and the lifestyles that are lived. Some people find it easy to excuse some of their actions that hurt or scandalize others as not a big deal. On the other side, some live a very respectable life but continually judge or criticize others who are struggling with serious issues.

The challenge that Jesus presents to the disciples is to be formed in the truth, to speak the truth honestly, and practice it sincerely. This is not easy and that is why one must know their limits and recognize their need for God's help. Jesus does not ask and does not expect us to do it on our own. One needs both God and the fellow Christians to live this way. Jesus spent the night in prayer so that he would be rooted in that relationship with the Father as he spoke to the crowds. Time in prayer is also essential for each disciple.

Christianity is also not an individualistic religion. Jesus calls disciples together in the Eucharistic celebration, to pray for one another, and to journey toward the truth with one

another. The church stresses the importance of the Sunday gathering for the Eucharist for this reason. In the Eucharist, one is formed in the teachings of Jesus, in the practices and disciplines of the Catholic community, where one is exposed to many people with different backgrounds and experiences who are trying to live the Gospel.

The passage from First Corinthians concludes Paul's discourse on the Resurrection. In the resurrection, people will not be resuscitated, brought back to this form of life. The resurrection will be an entrance into an entirely new life. Paul uses incorruptibility to express this. One will take on incorruptibility and immortality. The existence that one will have will not involve growing old or the body experiencing sickness or disease. The human experience will be transformed. While one will still grow closer to God, one will not face the same diminishment as in living the earthly experience. Paul attributes the human experiences to the result of sin. Sin brought God's great gift of life into weakness for humans lost the connection with God. The Law in the Old Testament could only point out what people should do to have a relationship with God. Jesus in being one with us in the human experience restored humanity's connection with God. Death and human corruption have been destroyed and the resurrection of Jesus manifests this. Death has become powerless for believers will live forever through Christ. The journey of a Christian is to stay devoted to Christ who has won the victory for that leads to fullness of life in God.

#### Reflection Questions:

Can you think of any examples of someone leading others who only has a minimal understanding of the situation?

When have you experienced a difference between what someone says and what someone does in life?

Can you think of any examples of evil assumptions producing evil results? How about good assumptions producing good results?

What hope do you find in Paul's message about the resurrection?

#### Themes

Hypocrisy

Conscience Formation

Examination of Conscience

Eternal Life

#### Prayer Suggestions:

For the Church: that the wisdom of God may enlighten our words and actions so that our deepest identity as children of God may be manifest

For the grace of discernment: that the Spirit will help us recognize what motivates us and inspire us to choose those actions that lead to fuller life

For freedom from self-deception: that God will heal our narrowness of mind and blindness to the truth proclaimed in the Gospel

For the grace to be single-hearted: that God will cleanse us of hypocrisy and help us to live fully what we profess