

Homily > OT VIII © > March 02, 2025 > The Real Power of Our Words

Today's readings challenge us to reflect deeply on the words we speak, and the judgments we make, in our daily lives. Jesus, through His teachings, consistently draws our attention to the practical aspects of Christian living. He calls us to use our words to heal, restore, and bring life—just as He did during His ministry. This means being intentional about our speech, using it not to harm or judge, but to build up, to bring joy, hope, and love into the lives of others.

In the first reading, from the Book of Sirach, we hear that what is inside us is revealed through our conversation. Sirach uses vivid imagery to remind us that just as the quality of a tree's fruit reflects the care it has received, so too do our words reveal what is in our hearts. We cannot hide our true nature—our words, whether uplifting or harmful, expose us for who we truly are. Sirach compares it to the process of separating grain from husks or firing clay to reveal its true form. Our words are a window into the depth of our souls.

This teaching prepares us perfectly for the Gospel reading from St. Luke. Jesus, in His wisdom, warns us not to rush to judgment. He uses humor to make His point clear: “Can a blind man lead a blind man?” He continues, “Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye but fail to notice the log in your own?” With these striking images, Jesus is inviting us to recognize that we are often far too quick to judge others, without acknowledging our own faults.

Judging others is a serious matter. When we make rash judgments, we reveal not only our lack of empathy, but also our pride. Jesus is not suggesting that we ignore immoral behavior or avoid correcting wrongs, but He cautions us against the hypocrisy of judging others when we are not aware of our own imperfections. He tells us to first remove the log from our own eye before we attempt to help someone else with their speck. This is a powerful reminder that we must first look within, examining our own actions, before pointing fingers at others.

St. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, echoes this sentiment. He encourages the faithful to be firm and steadfast in their devotion to the Lord. He reminds us that our labor in the Lord is never in vain. This is a call to focus on what truly matters—our relationship with God, and how we live that relationship in our daily interactions with others. We are called to use our words and actions to serve, not to criticize.

The lesson is clear that we should avoid judging others for several reasons. First, we must recognize that only God sees the full truth. He alone understands the circumstances, the motivations, and the struggles behind each person's actions. We often don't see the entire picture. Second, we may be prejudiced or influenced by our personal biases, especially when judging those closest to us. Third, we need to remember that we, too, are flawed. Jesus' humorous example of the man with the log in his eye reminds us that we are often blind to our own faults while quick to point out the shortcomings of others. We must approach others with humility, knowing that, but for the grace of God, we too could fall into similar struggles.

So, let us ask ourselves: how do our words impact others? Do we use them to bring life and healing, or do we sometimes allow them to cause harm and division? Jesus calls us to a higher standard,

one where our speech is a reflection of the love and mercy He has shown us. We are called to be agents of healing, to restore, to build up, and to bring hope into the world.

In closing, let us remember the advice of the saints: “When you point one finger of accusation at another, three of your fingers point at you.” Let us focus on our own hearts, praying for the grace to remove any hypocrisy, judgment, or harshness, and instead, use our words to share love, compassion, and truth. May we always strive to treat others as we would want to be treated, with kindness and understanding, and may God grant us the wisdom to speak words that heal and bring peace.