



HOLY MASS

**EIGHTH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME**

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8TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading: Sirach 27: 4-7

Resp. Ps: Psalm 92: 2-3, 13-16

2nd Reading: 1 Cor. 15: 54-58

Gospel Acc: Phil 2: 15-16.

Luke 6: 39-45



HOMILY TOPIC

**THE PRACTICE OF
SELF EVALUATION**

INTRODUCTION

**In preparation for the
Lenten season, the
readings of today invite
us to retrospect on our
lives as Christians**

INTRODUCTION

Our modern world and immediate society are awash with blame game, unreflecting criticism, mindless hypocrisy, negative judgment, wrong evaluation of situations and emphatic interest on externals.

THE QUESTION IS

- **Have you ever noticed how quick we are to judge others, yet slow to examine ourselves?**
- **Have you noticed how easy it is to highlight the faults of others while ignoring our own weaknesses?**
- **Have you noticed how easy it is to talk about the flaws of your spouse, yet not easy to talk about yours?**
- **Have you noticed how quickly we criticise our society president, chairman, priest and politicians, yet can't just protect public property?**

DO YOU ALSO FEEL THIS WAY?

- **In my private reflections, I am usually alarmed at the rate modern Christians get far from themselves and from their conscience which remains the last and truest arbiter of integrity.**
- **I am frightened by the pervasiveness of judgementalism and externalism (unfortunate packaging) that ensnare most of us.**
- **I am worried at the often unjust bifurcation we place between cause and effect, between who we are and what we do.**

FIRST READING

Sirach 27: 4-7

The book of Sirach compares human character to a sieve that separates the chaff from the grain. Just as fire tests the quality of gold, so too do our words reveal the true nature of our hearts. We may try to hide our real thoughts, but eventually, they will be exposed by what we say. This passage invites us to examine ourselves

SECOND READING

1 Cor. 15: 54-58

St. Paul reminds us that our ultimate hope is in Christ's victory over sin and death. He tells us to remain "steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor 15:58). This is crucial because the words we speak are often influenced by our spiritual state. If we focus on the victory of Christ and the grace we receive from Him, our words will reflect faith, hope, and love.

GOSPEL

Luke 6: 39-45

Similarly, Jesus reminds us in the Gospel that “out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks” (Lk 6:45). What we say, whether good or bad, comes from within us.

IN THE PRACTICE OF SELF EVALUATION

**In all these readings, we find
their summation in the
background of evaluating
ourselves in the light of our
words (1st Reading), Life (2nd
Reading) and fruit (Gospel).**

1. SELF-EVALUATING OUR WORDS

The first reading tells us that our words reveal the content of our hearts and mirror our nature much as action flows from it.

- We can ask ourselves what is the nature of our utterances?**
- What do they reveal about us?**

1. SELF-EVALUATING OUR WORDS

Our utterances can be profane, immoral, misleading, condemnatory, calumnatory, complaining, gossiping, judgemental, vulgar....

In this case, we may need to correct the mindset and heart conditions that produce these utterances for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks (Luke 6: 45).

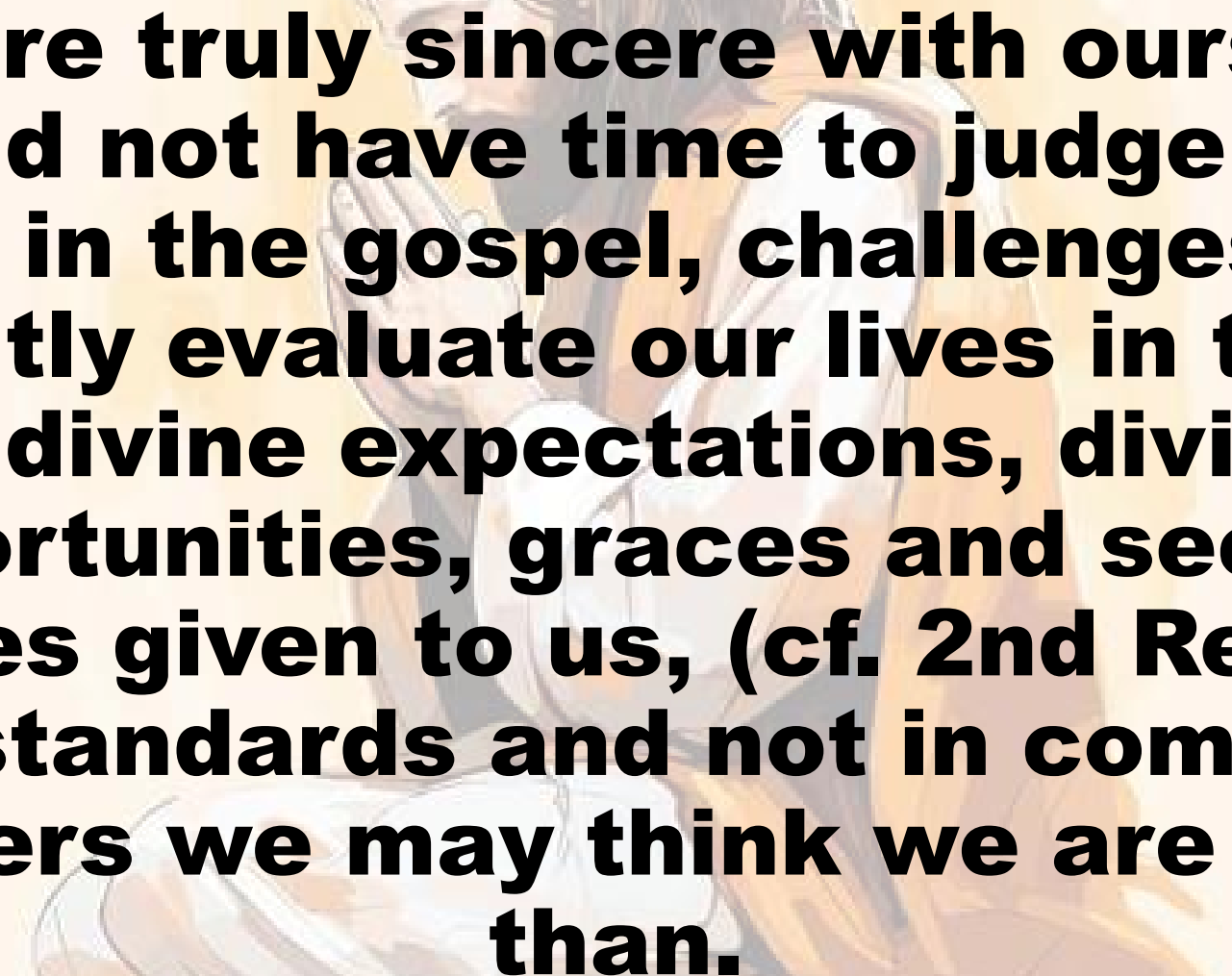
These negative utterances, even when we project them unto others, are often a reflection of what we are.

1. SELF-EVALUATING OUR WORDS

The truth is that those who are very sincere in self-evaluation are very slow to condemn others. Because our utterances can also be moral, holy, edifying, encouraging (Like Paul's to Corinthians today), praise-giving (like the psalm of today), worship/prayer serving, correcting, proclaiming, declaring of His truth.

2. SELF-EVALUATING OUR LIFE

If we are truly sincere with ourselves, we would not have time to judge others . Jesus, in the gospel, challenges us to constantly evaluate our lives in the light of divine expectations, divine opportunities, graces and second chances given to us, (cf. 2nd Reading) divine standards and not in comparison to others we may think we are better than.



2. SELF-EVALUATING OUR LIFE

Jesus also wants us to be true to ourselves. To really ask ourselves, how much of our secret lives, we would be proud to show in public. Jesus wants us to assess ourselves and evaluate truly if really we are on the path to heaven or to hell. Jesus wants us to indeed confront our sickness as we embark on healing others; to tackle our nakedness now before the eternal light that reveals our darkness shines at the end of time.

3. SELF-EVALUATING OUR FRUITS

God's primary commandment to man in the book of Genesis isto bear fruit.

(Gen. 1: 28, 9: 1) We can still ask ourselves today what kind of fruit we bear in our world. Jesus said, that a tree is known by its fruit (Luke 6: 44). The spirit of God in us must bear fruits (Gal. 5: 22) and fruits are higher than gifts for our fruits are a measure of our connection with Him (John 15: 5).

3. SELF-EVALUATING OUR FRUITS

- **How do I impact those around me positively?**
- **What fragrance of love and goodness do I exude?**

This is the summon of Jesus to those who are His own but the contagion of moral evil which is fast becoming a normalcy in our society showcases the contrary!

In all, modern society seems to lack conscience and is on a fast track to perdition.

The Opening Prayer reminds us that the course of our world should be directed by His peaceful rule.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the day, the best truth is the one which one tells one self. We must learn to tell ourselves once more in the light of the truth, about our moral condition, about our deliberate ignoring of the voice of conscience, about our constant numbing of God's word in our spirit, about our constant rebuff of His graces and second chances.

May God of all secrets dispose us this Lenten season towards sincere openness to him and to ourselves through Christ our Lord. amen

OUR WEBSITE

**[www.immaculateconception
catholicchurch.com.ng](http://www.immaculateconceptioncatholicchurch.com.ng)**

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL GROWTH OF OUR PARISH

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of creation. From age to age you raise people for yourself. We thank you for the growth and achievements that we have attained so far as a family of Immaculate Conception Catholic parish. United in Jesus Christ, you form us as a parish with the mission of nurturing disciples through faith and human development, hospitality, prayer, and service. Groom us until we become equipped disciples empowered to serve.

We pray for our pastoral team, the parish priest, the pastoral council, and all leaders of organizations and societies. In their decisions and choices, grant them the wisdom to always understand your divine plan for us as a people. May they always be guided by the Holy Spirit as you build us up for your glory.

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL GROWTH OF OUR PARISH

Lord Jesus, we commit our present and future projects to you. We beg you, to provide the resources we need to build a befitting place of worship for you. Please bless us and give us a generous heart moved by faith and trust.

Dearest Mary immaculate, please intercede for us before your son Jesus Christ, that our journey as a Christian people might win us eternity. Amen

Mary immaculate, mediatrix of all graces

pray for us