

22 June 2020

“God's measure”

Mt 7,1-5

Do not judge, and you will not be judged; because the judgements you give are the judgements you will get, and the standard you use will be the standard used for you. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the great log in your own? And how dare you say to your brother, "Let me take that splinter out of your eye," when, look, there is a great log in your own? Hypocrite! Take the log out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.

According to Jesus' words, we should be very careful with the mistakes of other people. The Lord knows us human beings very well and knows about our temptation not to notice our own mistakes, to talk very little about them, and to want to know as little as possible about them. On the other hand, it can easily happen that we make other people's mistakes a big concern and are very attentive to them. It can even happen that we become particularly excited about the mistakes of other people which are similar or even identical to our own mistakes, which are more hidden and not openly visible to us. Therefore it is good to say that self-knowledge protects us from the folly of rising above other people.

By judging, especially unloving judging, is meant to pass judgment on the other person, to condemn him. This is an extremely unloving act that comes from an unreconciled heart, a heart that as a rule has not yet properly experienced and internalized the forgiving love of God. For if man had this, together with the right self-knowledge, he could not condemn unlovingly. He would know how God meets him and would act accordingly!

This is the key in the encounter with the other person and thus our standard. Let us accept it, then we will begin to measure and allocate with the measure of God! Then our judging will always be based on the way of God.

This is where we have to draw the difference: of course we have to be able to judge an action, whether it corresponds to the measure of God or not. The Word of the Lord must not be understood in such a way that we have to accept, so to speak, everything that other people do. We must therefore clearly distinguish between an action and the person.

A simple example: someone steals. This action is wrong and we can also look at it that way. So the judgment would be: it is a wrong action.

But we don't know the whole circumstances of the stealing, maybe it was not only greed but also need, maybe the person was forced to steal, etc. Therefore we should not fix him as a thief forever with our judgement, perhaps he has already recognized his mistake and repented.

We also have to deal correctly with the other example that Jesus gave, because Jesus did not instruct us to fundamentally overlook the mistake of another person. He has shown us the right way how to deal with it. It would even go against love and truth if we would leave the other person in his mistake, although we would have the possibility to point it out to him. We are supposed to be the guardians of our brother (*cf. Gen 4,9*)!

I would like to point this out with an example:

Our midwife Margaretha in the Agnus Dei Community had a consultation with a woman who was wondering whether or not to have an abortion! After a long conversation, she decided to have the baby and later told us what was decisive for her: the sentence of our midwife that her decision had to be based on the truth, and she knew the truth from her Christian faith (she had Christian roots) - namely, to let the child live. She had to make this decision for her child even against the will of her friend!

The consequence was that she said a whole YES to her child, the friend also followed this decision and then they were looking forward to the child!

The core of the Lord's statement in today's Gospel is to assert the primacy of love. The encounter with other people and with our brothers and sisters should be filled with that spirit with which God meets us. We can constantly ask for this Spirit and have our own hearts purified! Then the right attitude towards other people will find room in us!