

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Aug 26th 2015

In today's Gospel, Jesus has harsh words for the scribes and Pharisees and, at the same time, provides us with the opportunity to examine our own hearts. Jesus chastises the scribes and Pharisees for being hypocrites who appear beautiful and righteous on the outside, like "whitewashed tombs," but whom on the inside are "full of dead men's bones and every kind of filth." He continues by noting their hypocrisy and evildoing.

As many know, the scribes and Pharisees were intensely religious in all outward appearances, but this failed to match with what was truly inside. In essence, they tended to be pure ritually, but impure in their hearts. As I relate this teaching to my own life, I strive to look for consonance between what I believe and feel in my heart and how I act with others. I truly do my best to follow the teachings of Jesus in my attempt to get closer to God. Among the many lessons we learned from Jesus, I appreciate his teachings about acceptance, tolerance, patience, and, of course, love. In examining my own life, I do my very best to determine whether my daily actions truly match what is in my heart and vice versa. And where there is dissonance then I, too, am acting like the scribes and Pharisees that Jesus took to task.

I know we all recognize the importance of self-reflection, but I can think of few ways where such reflection assists us in not only examining our daily lives in a deeper manner, but reflection allows us the opportunity to then change our actions and, more importantly, our hearts. And if we are truly open to and accept the words of God then from there only good things can come!

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