Monday of the Twelfth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 7:1-5): Jesus said to his disciples: “Stop judging, that you may not be judged. For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you. Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove that splinter from your eye,’ while the wooden beam is in your eye? You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother’s eye.”

“For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you”

Fr. Jordi POU i Sabater
(Sant Jordi Desvalls, Girona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel has reminded me the words of “The Knight of the Rose” opera, by Hugo von Hofmannsthal: «The big difference lies upon the “how”». In many aspects of our life —particularly our spiritual life— the end result will change, depending upon “how” we do something.

Jesus said: “Stop judging, that you may not be judged” (Mt 7:1). But Jesus had also said that we are to correct our sinful brother, and to do that we have got to previously make some kind of judgment. In his writings, St. Paul does judge the Corinthian community and St. Peter condemns Ananias and his wife Sapphira for falsehood. Because of that, St. John Chrysostom explains: «Jesus is not saying we cannot prevent a sinner from sinning; yes, we have to correct him, though not as the enemy seeking revenge but, rather, as a doctor applying the cure». It seems, therefore, our judgment should be mostly made with an aim to mend, not to take revenge.

But what St. Augustine says is even more interesting: “The Lord prevents us from judging quickly and unfairly (...). We should first ponder whether we have not made a similar sin; let us remember we are fragile, and let us always [judge] with the intention of serving God and not ourselves”. When we see our brothers' sins, if we remember our own, it will not happen to us, as the Gospel says, that with a wooden beam in our eyes we try to take the splinter out of our brother's eye (cf. Mt 7:3).

If we are well prepared, we shall see the good and bad things in our fellow men, and almost unconsciously we shall form a judgment. But looking at others' faults from that point of view will help us as to the way “how” we judge: it will help us not to judge for the sake of judging, or just to say something

or, perhaps, to cover our own deficiencies or, simply, because everybody does it. And, above all, let us always remember Jesus' words: “For as you judge, so will you be judged” (Mt 7:2).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “People who are beyond hope pay all the less attention to their own sins, the more interested they are in those of others. They are looking for a chance to tear someone to bits, not to put that person to rights.” (Saint Augustine)

- “You cannot correct a person without love and without charity. Charity is like anesthesia which helps to receive the care and to accept the correction.” (Francis)

- “The fruits of charity are joy, peace, and mercy; charity demands beneficence and fraternal correction; it is benevolence; it fosters reciprocity and remains disinterested and generous; it is friendship and communion.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, № 1829)