

8th Sunday of the Year C

A good man draws what is good from the store of goodness in his heart. For a man's words flow out of what fills his heart. (Lk 6:45)



First Reading

Ecclesiasticus 27:4-7

In a shaken sieve the rubbish is left behind, so too the defects of a man appear in his talk. The kiln tests the work of the potter, the test of a man is in his conversation. The orchard where the tree grows is judged on the quality of its fruit, similarly a man's words betray what he feels. Do not praise a man before he has spoken, since this is the test of men.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:54-58

When this perishable nature has put on imperishability, and when this mortal nature has put on immortality, then the words of scripture will come true: Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting? Now the sting of death is sin, and sin gets its power from the Law. So let us thank God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Never give in then, my dear brothers and sisters, never admit defeat; keep on working at the Lord's work always, knowing that, in the Lord, you cannot be labouring in vain.

Jesus told a parable to them, "Can one blind man guide another? Surely both will fall into a pit? The disciple is not superior to his teacher; the fully trained disciple will always be like his teacher. Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother let me take out the splinter that is in your eye,' when you cannot see the plank in your own? Hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take out the splinter that is in your brother's eye.

There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit. For every tree can be told by its own fruit: people do not pick figs from thorns, nor gather grapes from brambles. A good man draws what is good from the store of goodness in his heart; a bad man draws what is bad from the store of badness. For a man's words flow out of what fills his heart."

Meditation

"Words! Words! Words!" cries Hamlet. Human speech can deceive as well as enlighten. It rarely captures all what is within us.

Charged with the responsibility of spreading the gospel, the disciples of Christ must be vigilant over their hearts, for each one speaks from the abundance of the heart. By means of the word we build together the community of mutual support. We who wish to bring others to the gospel, must first have lived it ourselves. Black marks on white paper become the word of God only when people can read it in our lives. In an age when empty words are multiplied, Christians remember that Jesus left them a life to imitate rather than mere doctrines to memorize. A life without words is worth more than words without life.