

September 12, 2025

Daily Reflections



THE MOTE AND BEAM

By Elisabeth Beall

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

*“Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye,
but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own?
How can you say to your brother,
‘Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,’
when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye?
You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first;
then you will see clearly
to remove the splinter in your brother’s eye.”*

LUKE 6:41-42

Reflection

These days, you don’t have to look far to find an eye-rolling example of

hypocrisy. You hear it from our elected officials and the purveyors of the so-called facts, who have no qualms about stretching the truth to convince us of whatever it is they want us to believe; you may see it among your friends and colleagues, who are utterly confident in their own rightness and feel compelled to show you the errors of your thinking; you may experience it with your doctor, who scolds you about your poor diet but is 30 pounds overweight, or your neighbor, who complains about your poor yard maintenance but hasn't removed his Christmas lights since the January before last.

I could spotlight countless examples, and so could you. But then we would both be doing just what Jesus chides us not to do. After all, for all our disdain of hypocrisy, do we not behave hypocritically ourselves?

When we listen to the railing of one political faction against another, although we claim to hate such divisiveness ... do we not also choose one side over the other, and explain to anyone close enough to hear us why our side is right, and the other wrong?

When we complain about a colleague's fault – arriving late, not meeting deadlines, taking credit for work that is not their own – are we forgetting that we are also far from perfect? That that very colleague may see our own faults very clearly, and complain about those?

Of course, we all know that we are imperfect. But so many of us suspect that we really know better than the people around us – that it is our thoughts and opinions that should be heeded. I confess that I often turn to Google when speaking with a particularly challenging family member, discreetly (so I think!) fact-checking her just to confirm that I'm righter than she is.

Where is the dear neighbor in all this? How are we loving our neighbor as ourselves when we are judging, criticizing, and feeling superior? Certainly that is not how we want others to view or treat us; certainly that is not how God views or treats us.

If we strive to be the people God created us to be, we need to swing that spotlight away from the people around us and back onto ourselves, acknowledging our own faults and striving to smooth them away – and loving, simply loving, the people around us, rather than holding them under a microscope and grading them poorly in comparison to ourselves.



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For Pondering

- St. Anthony Mary Claret said, "The man who truly loves God also loves his neighbor." What habit can you quit to love your neighbors more, and judge them less?

- What is the wooden beam in your own eye? Pray for the clarity to discern it, and for the grace to remove it.
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For Prayer

*Blessed are you who face your fears, and
who have the courage to walk
through them;
for you have found the pathway to
healing and wholeness.*

*Blessed are you who have learned from
your mistakes, and
have brought them into the light;
for through regret and forgiveness
new life is born.*

*Blessed are you who have developed patience,
whose actions arise from your
heart and soul;
for the art of right timing brings
fulfillment.*

*Blessed are you who respect another's being,
who act not out of anger, jealousy,
or frustration;
for you have learned that love is
ever the answer.*

*Blessed are you who walk gently upon Earth,
who recognize your interconnectedness
with all of life;
for you are in communion with the
Heart of creation!*

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