

“For the measure with which you measure will in turn be measured out to you.” Words from our Gospel today from the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel according to Luke – Sisters and Brothers, May the Lord give to you his peace and his joy.

Today, Jesus is not asking us how we measure up. What he is really asking us to examine is how we *go about measuring*: What is the measure with which you measure? Indeed, there are different ways of going about measuring based upon the standards that we use for doing so. If I wanted to measure how wide this ambo was, the standard by which I would measure it would be this tape measure. This device is the measure with which I measure and I can measure other things by this same standard instrument. Furthermore, every such tape measure has a standard that its measurements are backed up by. The standard for the meter as a unit of length used to be 1 tenth of 10 million from the equator to the North Pole along the contour of the earth which passed through Paris. That was the standard for which we *consistently* measured units of distance. Now the standard measurement for the meter is actually compared to the speed of light. Another example: our currency as a measurement of financial value used to be backed up by the gold standard, but now our money is backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government that manages the affairs of our nation’s economy. You know why nobody knows what a catch is in the NFL anymore – because they don’t have a good standard to compare it to and so you keep getting controversial calls...

What is the measure with which we are to measure? Jesus implores us: “in your judging and condemning, in your giving and forgiving: be merciful - how? - *just as* your heavenly Father is merciful.” God is our standard of measurement. Every other measuring stick we have falls short – it will render imprecise measurements. It will lead to judging, condemning, lack of forgiveness, and stinginess instead. By definition, mercy is giving something to someone who doesn’t necessarily deserve it. It is a superabundance, a lavishness, a going above and beyond, generously exceeding what is required. Such mercy and superabundance is characteristic of all of God’s dealings with humanity. God’s creation is full of beautiful flowers and billions of stars. The universe in which we live is so particular and yet vast beyond comprehension. That human beings are made in God’s image and likeness is amazing... When God saved Israel from Egypt, they were not only released from slavery but were commanded by the pharaoh to leave with all of Egypt’s treasures and livestock. God established Israel in a land flowing with Milk and Honey. When King Solomon asked God for Wisdom, God replied, “Wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, possessions, and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have.” Fast forward to Jesus, God’s miracle at Cana’s wedding feast gave to us good wine, and when Jesus fed the hungry crowd of five thousand, there were twelve wicker baskets of food left over. When the friends brought the man on a stretcher to be cured of his paralysis, he not only cures him that he can take up his mat and go home but he can go in peace since his sins are also forgiven. God’s

Kingdom seems small at first, like a mustard seed, but indeed it grows into the largest of plants. And then despite our sinfulness, God goes beyond the limits of justice and deals with us in mercy, willing to leave behind the 99 sheep to find the one that was lost, rejoicing and throwing the greatest celebration even upon finding that one, singular lost coin worth no more than a penny. Everything about God is like a *good measure*, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, pouring into our laps. Everything about God is merciful. Everything about God is superabundant. And it is superabundant *unconditionally* because it is not based on anything we do, or the successes we have, or who we accept in our social circles, or even how much we give. It is given to enemies, to people who hurt others, and to those who steal other's possessions. God's unconditional favors towards us are not calculated but measured out to us on the basis of God himself who is love and simply loves. We would do well to take the time to reflect on who God is and what this means for our lives. None of us measure up, but because of God's superabundance, we all have been undeservedly blessed. The Christian, like our Father in heaven, is the person who goes beyond measure; the Christian is called to do something extra, called to give generously of themselves above and beyond, to exhibit the same merciful kindness of our heavenly Father. This does not make us faultless and perfect people but it does mean we try to adopt the attitude of the lover, who does not place limits upon his grace but generously and simply loves. This is the standard that by which we need to measure out our love. The world doesn't love in this way, it doesn't think this way, but this is how we Christians are to measure up.

One of the stories I grew up reading was from a Children's book entitled, Johnny the Clockmaker, about a young man who is determined to build a grandfather clock with all its complicated mechanisms. The advice that is given to him is: "Measure Twice, Cut Once (2x)." By double measuring and checking our work, we can avoid making costly mistakes and not waste the materials we have worked so hard to obtain. As Jesus and Joseph measured wooden planks to be cut for houses & buildings, they would have had to have been attentive to the measurements they were making so ensure that the structures people used and lived in would be safe and wouldn't collapse on them. Their work demanded precise measurements. If we are attentive to the measurements that we make, and double check our work, we can be sure not only to unintentionally cut someone off who deserves our love and respect but also be more intentional about measuring up to our Christian standard. Today, we are asked to measure twice and cut once. Furthermore, we are called to realize that our way of measuring life ultimately needs to be measured against the way God in his Mercy acts towards his creation. That is our Christian standard. If we start measuring this way, and are intentional about our measuring, we will become more and more like our God whose name is Mercy. Let me conclude by saying that the Good News of today is indeed: "The measure with which you measure will in turn be measured out to you." That's not a threat but a promise to you from our Lord.

**Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Lectionary: 81**

**Reading 11 SM 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23**

---

In those days, Saul went down to the desert of Ziph  
with three thousand picked men of Israel,  
to search for David in the desert of Ziph.  
So David and Abishai went among Saul's soldiers by night  
and found Saul lying asleep within the barricade,  
with his spear thrust into the ground at his head  
and Abner and his men sleeping around him.

Abishai whispered to David:

"God has delivered your enemy into your grasp this day.

Let me nail him to the ground with one thrust of the spear;

I will not need a second thrust!"

But David said to Abishai, "Do not harm him,

for who can lay hands on the LORD's anointed and remain unpunished?"

So David took the spear and the water jug from their place at Saul's head,

and they got away without anyone's seeing or knowing or awakening.

All remained asleep,

because the LORD had put them into a deep slumber.

Going across to an opposite slope,

David stood on a remote hilltop

at a great distance from Abner, son of Ner, and the troops.

He said: "Here is the king's spear.

Let an attendant come over to get it.

The LORD will reward each man for his justice and faithfulness.

Today, though the LORD delivered you into my grasp,

I would not harm the LORD's anointed."

**Responsorial Psalm PS 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13**

---

**R. (8a) The Lord is kind and merciful.**

Bless the LORD, O my soul;

and all my being, bless his holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and forget not all his benefits.

**R. The Lord is kind and merciful.**

He pardons all your iniquities,

heals all your ills.

He redeems your life from destruction,

crowns you with kindness and compassion.

**R. The Lord is kind and merciful.**

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,

slow to anger and abounding in kindness.

Not according to our sins does he deal with us,

nor does he requite us according to our crimes.

**R. The Lord is kind and merciful.**

As far as the east is from the west,

so far has he put our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

**R. The Lord is kind and merciful.**

**Reading 21** [COR 15:45-49](#)

---

Brothers and sisters:

It is written, *The first man, Adam, became a living being,*  
the last Adam a life-giving spirit.

But the spiritual was not first;  
rather the natural and then the spiritual.

The first man was from the earth, earthly;  
the second man, from heaven.

As was the earthly one, so also are the earthly,  
and as is the heavenly one, so also are the heavenly.

Just as we have borne the image of the earthly one,  
we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one.

**Alleluia** [JN 13:34](#)

---

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

I give you a new commandment, says the Lord:  
love one another as I have loved you.

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Gospel** [LK 6:27-38](#)

---

Jesus said to his disciples:

“To you who hear I say,

love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,  
bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

To the person who strikes you on one cheek,  
offer the other one as well,

and from the person who takes your cloak,  
do not withhold even your tunic.

Give to everyone who asks of you,  
and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back.

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

For if you love those who love you,  
what credit is that to you?

Even sinners love those who love them.

And if you do good to those who do good to you,  
what credit is that to you?

Even sinners do the same.

If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment,  
what credit is that to you?

Even sinners lend to sinners,  
and get back the same amount.

But rather, love your enemies and do good to them,  
and lend expecting nothing back;

then your reward will be great  
and you will be children of the Most High,  
for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Stop judging and you will not be judged.  
Stop condemning and you will not be condemned.  
Forgive and you will be forgiven.  
Give, and gifts will be given to you;  
a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing,  
will be poured into your lap.  
For the measure with which you measure  
will in return be measured out to you.”