

PASTOR'S COLUMN—JULY 7, 2014

Dear Parishioners:

Jesus wants us to follow the 10 Commandments but if we read the Old Testament about the Israelite people, we notice that they tend not to follow the big 10. God's response is one of sadness at the Chosen People's disobedience. At times God is portrayed as upset with them as well. However, from the larger Scripture perspective, God is merciful to the Israelites. And then in the New Testament, Jesus comes to live out God the Father's mercy for all people as given to us in his death and resurrection.

Where does this put our judging of people? In the name of compassion in Christ, Jesus reminds us to be aware of the "wooden beam" in our eye before we start looking for the "splinter" in somebody else's eye. The "wooden beam" is our own "weeds" amidst the "wheat" of our hearts. Yes, there can be some hypocrisy floating around in our hearts. This is the inconsistent part of us that falls short at times in adhering to the 10 Commandments. One of the symptoms of hypocrisy is self-righteousness where we think we are better than others.

In the light of the Scriptures which includes the 10 Commandments, we are wise to humbly admit that we are not better than others. We have both our "weeds" and "wheat" moments and they are mixed together in the mystery of our personhood. Let us not fret about this, but rather, thank God for treating us mercifully in Jesus. And as a result, let us more humbly face our "wooden beam" and more compassionately approach our "splinter" neighbor.

Humbly in Christ,

Fr. Terry