

## Homily Helps

### *(Key Reflection Points for Safe Haven Sunday 2019)*

#### **Readings for the Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time, March 2-3**

Sirach 27:4-7

Psalm 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16

1 Corinthians 15:54-58

Luke 6:39-45

#### **Sirach 27:4-7**

- Strangers should be tested, not trusted. To know and trust a person takes time. Children need to be taught that true relationships are for people you know and trust. People you spend time with in person and with others, and not simply online alone and in an exclusive relationship. This needs to be stressed in light of internet predation.
- The way we carry ourselves socially is important. As Catholics, there is a conduct we are called to and this includes the way we act and live both online and offline. This includes our choice of speech (e.g., sexualized profanity, sexting). There is great merit in respecting all people and all encounters both online and offline.

#### **Psalm 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16**

- We are called upon and encouraged to praise God: “It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praise to your name, Most High.” Praising God is good work and is honorable to Sabbath days, but also every day and at all hours. It is good in itself and good for us. This glory is due to God. It would be unjust for us to withhold such praise from God. Too, it is good to give thanks for the mercy God extends to us over and over again and have received. God’s mercy goes before every failing and action that happens online and offline. As Blessed Solanus Casey would have said: “Thank God ahead of time” for the mercies and love he extends to you.
- We must praise God everywhere, in public and in secret, and especially with our families. Give praise together for his loving kindness and faithfulness. You can do this together as a family by beginning the day with morning prayer and ending the day with night prayer. Thank God together for his love, mercy and compassion. Thank him for his patience with you in any failings, including sexual failings (e.g., masturbation, pornography, sexting, lusting, etc.). Ask your children at the beginning of the day how they will glorify God in their actions online and offline. At the end of the day, encourage your family to think about any ways you failed to give God praise in your actions throughout the day online and offline.
- With great joy, remember what God has done for you and your family. Has he healed you from a sexual addiction? Has he provided for a loved one in a way you thought was never possible? Has the marriage of your sister and brother in law made great strides through

counseling? Whether we know it or not, this is God providing! No matter your current struggle, God is providing for you right now in ways you would never expect.

- God is always righteous and just. You have reason to place your every trust in him. If you live your life according to God's love and plan for you, you will be fruitful all the days of your life. Anyone who ever trusted in God found him faithful and all-sufficient, and none were ever ashamed of their hope in him. We live in this hope day in and day out! We are people of hope. The devil wants us to be discouraged and think there is no hope for us in our struggles and failings. This is not the message of Sacred Scriptures, the Church or Christ!

## **1 Corinthians 15:54-58**

- Death is defeated by Jesus' resurrection. Death has no power over the person living in him! For those who are not practicing the faith and who are living lives contrary to what God calls them to, death still has its sting. Sin is an offence against God that we all must appear before God whom we have offended. We will all be judged according to the sins we have not repented (received absolution for in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) for. This is an encouragement to all of us to ask God for forgiveness for the ways we have lived our lives online and offline that are not in accord with God's plan for life and love.
- Because we know death is defeated and we were made to live in heaven with the Trinity for eternity, stand firm and unshakable for the truth in the here and now. We should work hard in every thought and action now, serving the Lord, because today and tomorrow counts for eternity! Every click, every image, every text matters.
- God sees all of our efforts to live a life according to his will. He asks us to put forth all of our strength to align our wills with his will, but also reminds us that without him we can do nothing. If we are struggling with pornography, alcoholism, or whatever it is, we must seek counseling and professional assistance, but we can't forget to go to God for help by receiving him in the Holy Eucharist, Confession and conversing with him in prayer. We need both.

## **Luke 6:39-45**

- Who do you have in your life to lead you in the life of faith and virtue? We shouldn't look to other blind men and women to lead us. We need Jesus to be our leader and our teacher. Too, we need to surround ourselves with men and women who seek Jesus and who can witness to us with their lives of faith and disciple. We need individuals like this to hold us accountable in our daily lives. We all need accountability partners.
- We are more tolerant to our own sins than those of others, aren't we? We see others out in public doing something they shouldn't, but we justify our screen time and other sins we do in secret. God shows mercy for public and private sins. We need to be as merciful to others as God is to us for the sins we struggle with in secret.
- To produce good fruit in our lives, we must be good at the very root, from deep within, at our heart. What does our heart desire? Do we desire to truly will the good of the other? Do we desire to lust after others and use them for sexual pleasure or to move our way up in our careers? True love is to "will the good of the other." This the love Jesus shows us.

This is the love we are called to show others. True fruitfulness comes when we live according to God.

- God wants to heal us. He invites us and our hearts to be healed. He wants to perform a radical change in us from deep within, beginning in our hearts. We need to give him permission. We need to give him permission to heal us from past childhood wounds that may have included abuse or pornography exposure. Past wounds that include sexual relationships outside of marriage. Past wounds that included your parents not protecting your from something, or finding out that your own child discovered the dark side of the internet that you can't stop blaming yourself about.