



FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN

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One of the most often quoted Scriptures (rightfully so) is from the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 7: 1-3.... "Judge not, lest you be judged". The passage goes on to say "because with the judgement you pronounce you will be judged and with the measure you use it will be measured to you". I thought of this Scripture this week when I was walking through our indoor Italian market between Arthur Avenue and Hughes. There at one of the shops was a representative from the City. He was checking the scales and making sure they were accurate. Store owners of this type have to pay an annual fee of \$20 to certify that their scales are fair, that they are really giving you or me the half pound of food that we order. The City knows that justice matters and humans, left to their own devices, are not always just.

When God measures us on his scale of justice it is always perfect because God himself is perfect. He is all merciful and all just. He is not bias or unfair. He is the author of our lives and keeps us in being every day. Therefore, in justice, everything that we have is his. Thus we can say, that If he wants to allow us a long life, "blessed be God". If he wants to purify us through sickness, sadness, loneliness, we can still say, "blessed be God". He knows us and knows exactly what we need to become the people he made us to be.

We, on the other hand, cannot judge another's soul because we are not God. We cannot take life or hurt it, because it doesn't belong to us. Jesus told us, "Judge not, lest you be judged" as a warning: "don't stand in judgement of another human being because that is my job (God's), not yours". Instead, Jesus invites us to be his hands and feet of mercy to a world that is dying for love.

This call to avoid judgment does not mean we can't have opinions. It doesn't mean we should pretend objective evil is good or vice-versa. We need to make many judgments throughout our day about what we should do and what we should avoid. But what we can never do is judge another's soul or their moral culpability. We aren't God. We can't read their souls, and even if we could, we are not their judge.

Getting practical, this week, why not try this: when we see someone do something we don't like, we can say in our heart: "Lord, I know you love this person. I will show them mercy because you have shown me so much mercy"

**God Bless,
Father Jonathan**

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