

What's in the Mirror

When was the last time you looked in the mirror? I am going to guess, most of us looked in a mirror this morning while preparing for church. What did you see when you looked in the mirror? Gray hair, wrinkles?

Could you see your heart when you looked in the mirror?

It's kind of hard to see our hearts. We know they are there inside us, beating, ticking away, and keeping us alive. Unless you have had an echocardiogram lately, I am guessing most of us haven't really seen our actual hearts.

We read today in our gospel lesson how the Pharisees and scribes asked Jesus about how his disciples were eating with unclean hands. Why weren't they following the traditions of long ago, and why were they eating with defiled hands?

Jesus responds and quotes the prophet Isaiah.

“The Lord said: Because these people draw near with their mouths and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote.”

Their mouths honor with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

Where is your heart? Is your heart prepared to worship or are you worried about everything else going on in your life? It's hard to tell where a person's heart is, isn't it? We can't see what is inside someone. Or can we?

Many times, what is on the outside, really isn't what can be found on the inside.

I can't help but remember a very faithful saint from 4
bells when I think of what is inside a person's heart.

Growing up in the 80's, we wore dresses to church every
Sunday. Dad wore his suit and tie. We had to look good
every Sunday for church and Sunday school. I was a
tomboy growing up, so every Sunday morning for me was
a nightmare! Dresses and tights were not my thing, and I
fought it every Sunday, but in the end, mom always won
that battle! My parents made sure we looked the part for
church.

Upon arriving at church we would see all our friends
and family all dressed up just like we were. We looked
good, ready and worthy to worship God.

All but Basil.

Basil Mcdavitt was an elderly gentleman who sat up in the balcony every Sunday. I remember Basil as an older

man with a white, scruffy beard. His clothes were

nothing special, usually dull in color and I never

remember Basil wearing a tie, much less a suit to church.

One thing set Basil apart. Basil didn't wear shoes. I

never saw him wear shoes! Not even in the dead of

winter! Something else I remember about Basil.

His smile.

I never saw him without that smile! He always looked happy, downright joyful even to be at church with all of us. Ready and full of the spirit of God, Basil showed up each Sunday to worship God with his heart. Basil loved God and he loved all of us which was evident to each member at 4 bells. You see, every year, when our birthdays rolled around, Basil would send us a birthday card. Not just my family, every single person in our church received a birthday card from Basil on their birthday! A heartfelt message and good thoughts for another year were always in that special birthday card from Basil.

So was it ok that this caring, sweet man never wore shoes to church and never dressed up a day in his life?

We know the answer to that.

I, for one, am quite happy that times have changed a bit and we don't dress up quite like we used to for church.

Basil set a great example of what it is like to worship God with his heart. He never looked great at church, but his smile made up for what he lacked in fancy clothes. His heart was evident to each of us on our respective birthdays as we would remember this very special man with no shoes who thought of us on our birthday.

The heart takes precedence over the lips in worship.

Scripture takes precedence over tradition in worship.

We don't come to church every Sunday to show off our nice clothes. We come to worship with a heart ready to praise and worship a God who loves us so much he sent his son to die for us. God doesn't care if your hair is green or blue. He doesn't care if you wear shoes to worship.

This is a hard one, but he doesn't even care if you are covered in tattoos and piercings!!!

God doesn't see us from the outside looking in. He sees us from the inside. He knows where our hearts are and he loves us. He forgives us. He wants our whole heart to show up every Sunday as we worship him. He wants us to show our hearts to the world. To love the less fortunate, to put other's needs before our own. To share the good news we hear today! God doesn't want us to dress up! God just wants us to show up! Ready to worship him with our hearts. The things inside are what matters. Don't judge a book by it's cover! Until you see someone's heart, don't assume anything!

Each day, when you look in the mirror, as you prepare for the day ahead, see what is on the inside. Examine your heart and be ready to tell the good news of Jesus to our hurting world. Like sweet, old Basil, show others what is on the inside. Show others your heart. It is there that they will see Jesus!

Amen