

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
[13 September 2020](#)

This weekend Chris Stein our Seminary-Intern, as part of his preaching initiative and his preaching experience, is giving a post communion reflection at all the Masses today. He will be doing this seven times throughout the year.

I just want to offer a brief homily.

Here we are, Ordinary Time ... this time is all about growth in our relationship with the Lord, growth in our discipleship. And where is the Word of God taking us?

We are going along with Sirach, whenever you hear the Book of Sirach, you should think this is a Catholic Book in the Bible, you won't find this in a Protestant Bible. The primary purpose of the book is to teach those who are new to the faith, we call them Catechumens ... like those who are in RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, but just like those who need to learn the faith for the first time, we are all lifetime learners, so we need the review, we need the refresher.

Sirach is the name of the writer of this book. Where is Sirach taking us? What does he want to teach us?

Two things... obstacles to relationships and freedom in relationships.

First, obstacles... Anger and Hatred.  
Horrible things!

Once they have hold on us, we tend to hold tightly to them. Anger and Hatred make us suffer relentlessly and because they make us suffer, they normally pull all around us down into that suffering as well. Someone who clings to anger, normally can't let go of what makes them angry and what that is, is usually something or many things in that person's life and then in turn they can't let go of the things that make them angry and spiteful in those individuals around them. Anger and Hatred are horrible dragons to slay.

But Sirach says, if you want to be truly free ... slay them! This is how...  
You have to want to stop suffering.  
You have to want to stop being ungrateful.  
You have to want to stop being ill at rest and ill with peace.  
You have to choose forgiveness.  
You have to want it.

Pray for forgiveness. In our Catholic Tradition - go to confession ... seek pardon for yourself. In feeling and knowing that pardon, it is then easier to pardon others.

Sirach gives a last piece of advice. Memento mori ... Do you remember this from a couple of Lents ago? It means "Remember Your Death." Go there! If these obstacles are resonating with you... ask yourself... do you want to die an angry, hateful person? That kind of death is always severe and ugly or do you want to die with grace and dignity. This is the end of a peaceful person.

Every breath of forgiveness and love will slay the dragon of anger and hate. You have to want it. It has to be chosen. Not just once but over and over again.

Sirach last two words are powerful and pithy and poignant and he gets the last two words in this brief homily today, let them stick to the heart and soul... here they are: OVERLOOK FAULTS.