

February 23, 2010

Scripture Reading: Matthew 7:1-5

Lent is a season to work on our own lives, not the lives of others. More correctly, Lent is a season to allow God to work on our own lives, trusting that God is also working on others.

On airplanes, we are instructed that in case of emergency we should put on our own oxygen masks before we try to help someone else.

In this section of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 - 7) Jesus warns his listeners about sitting in judgment of others. The image he uses is profound. How is it possible, he asks, to help someone else get a speck of dust out of their eye when your own eye is blocked by a log.

While it's true that we can and should help others, it seems so much easier to fix others' problems than work our own. We can easily find fault with others, while overlooking the same problems in ourselves. (In fact, some say that what we don't like in others reveals something we don't like about ourselves.)

So during Lent, trust that God is at work in the lives of the people around you and spend time focusing on your own life. Search your own heart. Confess your own sins. Pray for your own needs. Ask God to transform your life and help you grow as a disciple of Jesus. It may seem selfish, but in the long run, it's the only way you can help your neighbor.