

## ***Sonny's Sayings***

"Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be." That great quote is from Thomas Aquinas in *The Imitation of Christ*. In essence, he is saying, "stop trying to fix other people, when you can't even fix yourself." It is a take on Jesus' words from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7: "Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?"

Now of course, we know that there are some problems with Aquinas' statement. We are on a journey together, and part of that journey means holding each other accountable, and looking for ways to help each other grow. In that context of journeying together and helping one another, part of being in community means that from time to time, we have to try to help each other out along the way, speaking truth to each other.

As valid as that point is, there are more important things that come from heeding Aquinas' words. You see, fixing other people is often an easy diversion for us. We might get caught up in harmful things and justify not changing them, or we might get overwhelmed addressing whatever is needed for "fixing ourselves." And what is the easiest way for us to take our mind off of our own issues and shortcomings? We work on fixing others. The behaviors, actions and words of others become an excuse for us not working on ourselves. Even worse, we let the stuff that others do make us tense, angry, and unhealthy.

But happily, we are in the season of Lent, a time where we are asked specifically to work on our own spiritual journey, and to let go of the journey of others, except where we are asked to join in their journeys. Lent is a season where we are asked to devote ourselves to examining and practicing a deeper spirituality through prayer, reflection, Bible Study and other practices, and most importantly, work on our relationship and connection with God instead of others' relationship with God. So during the Lenten Season, I invite you to let go of the idea of fixing the speck in others' eyes, and work on the log that might be in yours. At the very least, it will help you to see clearly! May worship be a blessing for you today.

***Blessings, Sonny***