



MEDITATIONS FOR LENT by Father Robbie Low

## **SECOND WEEK OF LENT – MONDAY Luke 6: 36-38**

*'Judge not that you be not judged.'*

Here we go again....asking the impossible. Life is full of judgements. We make them every day. We assess, try to discern, decide about people and things – make judgements. Our life is made up of decisions based on, we like to think, the best judgement we can make.

Is Jesus really asking me to lower my guard, put my smile clips in and wander around like an amiable buffoon taking everyone and everything at face value? Is He asking me to abandon any wisdom or knowledge I might have acquired and parade around bestowing a kind of lobotomised bonhomie on all and sundry? If so, I'm outa here, Lord.

Mercifully that isn't the case. Jesus own ministry is full of encounters which demonstrate a profound grasp of the reality of the persons thus encountered. He is extraordinarily merciful to some and witheringly rude to others. (People who paint Jesus as an indiscriminating soft touch haven't read the biography.) His aim, in both cases – and all those somewhere in between, is to bring people to God. Because God alone is the final judge of all.

I can, on a good day and for my own sanity and survival, make interim assessments. I must be careful that these are not pre-judices (pre-judgements) but rather post-judices (born of the reality of experience). For example, to depersonalise it, I make a judgement that Marxism is a lie, a secular heresy. I do so, not based on my upbringing or an imbibed view of history, but because I know from experience that Marxism has about as much chance of bringing joy, freedom, equality and prosperity to Man as a three-legged horse has of winning

the Epsom Derby. What I must not do is dismiss some temporarily seduced wrong-headed youth who spouts this tripe at me as beyond redemption. His intentions may be good even if his proposed route may be bonkers. Only God's judgement is final and I too am subject to it. So no behaving as if I were the ultimate arbiter. I am to make interim judgements but never ever to dismiss my fellow man from the consideration of repentance and mercy. Because - like it or lump it, at the final court of justice, mine may be the next case to be heard.

***Spiritual exercise:*** Is there someone who needs to come out from under your supposed *final* judgement. Pray to be set free from the prison of judgementalism.