

Shine, Jesus, Shine

I love varnishing, especially on Honduras Mahogany. It has a luster and a depth that makes me weak kneed. Its looks, its touch and its smell are my undoing. Countless hours of my life have been spent perfecting its application. There is a huge difference between the two coat wonder applications, often sold as the panacea for all ills, and the ten coat extravagance that takes a good month to apply.

Yet, even after the most meticulous application it is rarely perfect. Given time there are always the bumps and scratches that mar the surface and damage the wood beneath. The ravages of time, and the onslaught of the elements wear down the protective coats, dull the former luster and make the core vulnerable. When that happens it often means that we have to “wood” the item – strip it down to its raw structure so as to repair and re-establish the protective coatings.

It really speaks to me as a metaphor for our spiritual journey and of our Lenten sojourn. There are times when in spite of all the work that has gone into who and what we have become, that much like a varnished item, it will only last for a given time, what with all that assails us. Simply, much like the two requisite coats of varnish, that are needed each year so as to refresh and protect the beauty of the wood, so too, do we, as humans need such an embrace. It is what the journey to the cross and beyond symbolizes. It is about putting on the “armour of God” which refreshes, renews and shines. Indeed, we are to be varnished up “a Shine, Jesus, Shine” phenomenon.

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