

Father Rudy's Reflections
The Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 5, 2023

Lighten the Burden with Humility

My Sisters and Brothers in the Risen Lord,

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Many of us like to think of ourselves as kind, thoughtful, merciful, and empathetic individuals; we consider ourselves humble in what we do and say. We think we do not crave the spotlight, but as human beings we seem to be wired to promote our own status and seek constant applause from those around us. Yet *we can look around us and see those individuals* who are tap dancing as fast as they can so they can be recognized and praised. They vie for promotions, honors, trophies, and other means of advancement for many different reasons. Yes, we see this preoccupation in them, but do we recognize it in ourselves? Do we practice what we preach as followers of Jesus Christ?

Humility does not equate to a lack of self-esteem nor feelings of worthlessness; rather, humility is the recognition that God is always present in our lives and guides us throughout our days on earth. His love, grace, and mercy can transform our lives to accomplish great things in his name. This acknowledgment is a comfort and makes our burdens light. God created us in his image, with individual strengths and weaknesses, but God has a plan for each of us.

On this Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus speaks about humility in terms of the Pharisees and scribes. I urge you to etch his words into your hearts and live how he lived. For greater context of this virtue, here are some beautiful expressions from those who have sought its essence:

❖ *True humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less.*—C. S. Lewis, Catholic author

❖ *There is something in humility which strangely exalts the heart.*—St. Augustine

❖ *Do you wish to be great? Then begin by being. Do you desire to construct a vast and lofty fabric? Think first about the foundations of humility. The higher your structure is to be, the deeper must be its foundation.*—St. Augustine

❖ *Humility is the mother of all virtues, purity, charity and obedience. It is in being humble that our love becomes real, devoted and ardent. If you are humble nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are. If you are blamed, you will not be discouraged. If they call you a saint, you will not put yourself on a pedestal.*—St. Teresa of Calcutta

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Rudy