

Our Gospel passage about humility today is one that is probably familiar to many of us. The fact that our Lord teaches us about that virtue of humility in today's Gospel shows there is a need for us to remind ourselves often of how important putting that virtue into practice is. We see the importance of humility from the very beginning of the Bible with the story of our first parents and how their wanting to be equal to God, an attitude opposite of humility, led them to disobey God. We see the lack of humility in the story of the Tower of Babel. Then, in the New Testament, we see examples of humility in Mary in her being obedient to God and her recognizing and saying that she was his handmaid, his servant. We see that humility in John the Baptist when his disciples thought he might be the Messiah—he told them one greater would come after him. Then our Lord shows us humility over and over again, for example, in putting aside his glory as God to take on our human flesh to save us.

Do we see more attitudes toward humility that Adam & Eve had and the people in the story of the Tower of Babel had or do we see more examples today of the attitude toward humility that John the Baptist and Mary and Our Lord had? We might not think there is any harm in pride such as we see so many examples of, but we need to ask ourselves at those times why would we have this teaching in today's Gospel if pride was okay?

One of the problems of the attitude of pride is those who are well off may use their resources to acquire things to satisfy their pride and so not share those resources with the needy as we see our Lord teaches we should do at the end of the Gospel today when he says we should invite the poor, not the rich, to our dinners and the prayer Mother Teresa's helpers offer daily teaches that as they pray: Though you hide yourself behind the unattractive, the irritable, the exacting and the unreasonable, may I still recognize you and say Jesus my patient how sweet it is to serve you.

Those who find satisfaction and enjoyment in serving the poor are to see that is due to their love of our Lord, which Mother Teresa refers to in that prayer. Our prayer can be to ask our Lord to set our hearts on fire for his poor. Certainly because of all of the fraud that exists today we have to be careful which groups that collect to help the poor we donate to.

Humility is so important because pride about who we are and what we have prevents God from bringing us into a deeper union with him. God has given us the freedom to decide whether we will love him or let our pride lead us to love ourselves more than we love God.

We need to be able to see the ways our pride influences us because there is so much that prevents human beings from admitting our true condition as we can think that we are great in God's Kingdom. When we recognize those attitudes we can have a better relationship with our Lord, but without God's grace we cannot be worthy of God no matter what sacrifice we make.

The fact that we come to Mass shows humility because it shows we worship God because he is greater than we are, it shows we acknowledge our need for God's help. If we are careless in the practice of our faith we know we will not learn the humility our faith teaches us. In this celebration of the Eucharist our Lord gives us the grace to imitate his humility whenever we cooperate with his grace.