

FROM FATHER JOHN: v *“They tempted God in their hearts by demanding the food they craved. Yes, they spoke against God, saying, “Can God spread a table in the desert?” Yet he commanded the skies above and the doors of heaven he opened; He rained manna upon them for food and gave them heavenly bread. Man ate the bread of angels, food he sent them in abundance. He stirred up the east wind in the heavens, and by his power brought on the south wind. And he rained meat upon them like dust, and, like the sand of the sea, winged fowl, Which fell in the midst of their camp round about their tents.” ~ Psalm 78*

The Lord gave them bread from heaven.!!!



St. Augustine wrote that *“It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels.”* Our Lord Jesus says to us in Matthew’s gospel, *“The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”* (Matthew 23:12)

I remember when my nephew Nate was born. My sister-in-law Marcia was adamant that no one would ever give Nate a toy gun for a gift. She didn’t want any guns, real or toys, in the house, and she wouldn’t let Nate watch any TV that had any guns or violence in it.

Then, on Nate's fifth birthday, my brother Tim, gave Nate a toy gun; a squirt gun that was the size of a rifle! I thought my sister-in-law was going to explode with rage. I thought she was going to rip into my brother Tim like never before. But, there was no reaction. She was calm, cool and collected.

I asked Tim how he was able to pull that off and he told me he called Marcia ahead of time. He asked her permission and she said it'd be okay. So, I asked her about it and she said, "I decided to quit fighting the whole thing about toy guns because every time I turn around there's Nate turning a broomstick or a banana or a plunger or whatever into a make believe gun."

Kids love to pretend. God gives kids these huge and wonderful imaginations and when you give them a little cloth here, a little mask there, a broomstick, they can be anyone their mind tells them to be. They're really able to enter into the role and imagine themselves as something they're not. Putting on a mask and pretending is perfectly acceptable for a young child on Halloween.

But, it's not an acceptable way to live the Christian life and that's exactly the point that Jesus is making about the Pharisees when he tells the apostles, *"Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.'"* (Matthew 23:3-7)

The Pharisees put on a mask and pretended to be holy rather than actually live lives of holiness. *"The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*

If Michael Jordan came into the church one Sunday at mass said to all of us, "Aw, shucks folks, you know, I was never really any good at basketball" or if Tiger Woods walked into the church one Sunday at mass said to all of us, "Aw, shucks folks, you know, I was never really any good at golf. I'd rather have Fr. John's golf game than mine", we wouldn't believe Michael or Tiger. Not only that, we wouldn't think they were being humble either. We'd just think they were being insincere.

Humility is based on the Truth, with a capital T, on living lives that are honest and true, on living lives that truly reflect who we claim to be as Christians, as followers of Jesus Christ.

It's when we serve each other in all humility, in sincerity and in truth, it's when we watch out for each other, it's when we care for each other, it's when we pray for each other, that we are at our greatest, that we are truly exalted in the eyes of God. *"There is more value in a little study of humility and in a single act of it than in all the knowledge in the world."* -- Saint Teresa of Avila

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.

