

# Humility

*The Mother of all Virtues*



## Sunday Reflection With Fr. Rafal

Dear St. Joseph Parishioners and Visitors, Today is the Fourth Sunday of Lent. Our readings focus on a central Christian virtue: humility.

Humility is like a lamp. It enables us to appreciate true beauty, to see what really matters. When Michelangelo Buonarroti was in his mid-eighties, realizing his death was near, he confided to a friend that two things made him sad. "The first," he said, "is that I have not taken more care for the salvation of my soul." Then he added, "the second thing that saddens me is to die now, when like an infant, I am barely beginning to babble the first words of my art." Michelangelo had produced immortal works such as David, Moses, the Pieta and the Sistine Chapel. They have such overwhelming beauty that they often leave people breathless. Yet, at the end of his life, he realized that even these masterpieces - in light of eternity - were like incomplete words. "I am barely beginning to babble."

By his humility before God, Michelangelo was like St. Paul. Today we hear that no one can boast before God. We are saved by grace, says Paul. Our salvation is a gift from God. In the Gospel, we have a famous verse - John 3:16 - I hope all of you know it by heart, "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but have eternal life."

A person who had this great trust in God was also the Cure d'Ars - St. John Vianney. He mentioned that one day he received two letters. One of them praised him, said what a great saint he was; the other accused him of being a fake and a hypocrite. St. John Vianney commented, "The letter of praise gave me nothing. The letter of criticism took nothing from me. I am what I am in the eyes of God and nothing more."

In the eyes of God our works matter only if they express a dependence on him. And the wonderful thing is that acknowledging our sins can bring that same result: humility, reliance on God. This doesn't mean that we should keep sinning or start sinning. No: An unrepented sin can drag a person to hell. Jesus did not come to condemn, but to give life. That means returning to him, resolving to sin no more.

In just two weeks we will celebrate Palm Sunday - the inauguration of Holy Week. What we bring to Holy Week is humility - the awareness of who we are before God. In a human being, there is nothing more beautiful, more attractive than humility. Before God none of us can boast. We are saved by grace. He loves us so much that he has given his only Son.

Have a Blessed the 4th Week of Lent 2021!

*Fr. Rafal Ligenza*

St. Joseph Parish Administrator