

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 5, 2017

Reading 1 - Malachi 1:14b-2: 2b, 8-10

Malachi reminds us how easy it is to forget God's blessings and to turn aside from God's ways. In our first reading he is addressing how the priests at that time were misguiding the people. They had broken the covenant with God and had broken faith with one another. We must all try to follow God's rules and we must all be conscious of our own relationship with God. The Word must enter and live in our hearts, and be the center of our lives.

Reading 2 – 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13

In this reading, Paul talks about what it meant to be humble. He guided the Christian communities with the focus always on the faith and on Christ, not on any personal glorification. Paul understood the Word comes from God and how powerful it could be to change lives. Paul stressed the importance of serving and the giving of oneself in stewardship. Do not ask of another, what you would not do yourself. Do not to impose upon another, but just serve others, always looking for what more you can do. Serve the poor, serve the stranger, serve our families, friends and neighbors and serve anyone in need. What more can we do to humbly give praise and glory to God?

Gospel – Matthew 23:1-12

Today's gospel reminds us that we need to live by example and practice what we preach. If we live by our actions, this can have far reaching effects. Think of the early Christian martyrs whose example of faith led others to Christ. When we are asked to serve, or do good works in the name of God, we are asked to do this with humility. We should not want to receive personal gratification or thanks, but the thanks and credit is to be given to God. We are asked to live with equality and humility with each other, not placing one above another. We are all brothers and sisters, with one Father.

Reflection

To live by example and practice what we preach isn't always easy, it takes some effort. Having the perfect Golf game takes practice, having the perfect painting takes practice and anything that is good, takes practice.

Parents are a child's first teacher and role model. They are the two people that they look up to for advice, to learn from by example. God has given us the Word to live by and has tried to teach us by example as well. Jesus walked the earth and demonstrated the selfless, genuine, and authentic love that he demands of us. He taught the disciples and the multitudes that came to listen. He lived by example, loved God with his life and death. If we can work harder to live by example and practice what we preach, how far will the ripple effect be?

Father asked us this week at Mass, "How many hours do we devote to God?" Is it only the one hour at church on Sunday? Examine your conscience and your actions and how you live by example and how others see you. Open your heart to God and allow him to work through you and you will see the many great things he can do.

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