

- All Saints' Day this Friday—a holy day of obligation.
- All Souls Day Saturday: Mass at 9. Indulgences for visiting cemetery; see the Pastor's Porch article in the bulletin for greater detail.

- Isn't the arrogance of this Pharisee in our Gospel today just beyond the pale.
- Jesus tells us: *"The Pharisee took up HIS position and spoke this prayer to HIMSELF!"* ... *"O God..."*
- His prayer becomes an act of self worship. *"Aren't I wonderful? Humanity is SO lucky and deserving to have me as a model to emulate."* *"God, aren't YOU lucky to have me."*
- ...and the angels gag.
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- And yet...no doubt we've all met people sort of like that...and felt that same disgust.
- Imagine how God feels, then, when someone comes before him in supposed prayer with an attitude of prideful, arrogant self-righteousness.
- The lesson we can learn from this parable is that, while God does not approve any sin, his mercy and forgiveness is available for only the penitent...those who humble themselves before Him.
- After all...our sins led to the crucifixion of Jesus; how do we DARE be arrogant when our selfish actions led to that?

- One danger that leads to arrogant pride is highlighted in Jesus' parable: comparing ourselves with other people rather than to the objective model of Jesus.
- How often do we hear, and am even guilty of saying: *"Well, at least I don't do this or that...like HE does, or SHE does."*
- But we can and will always find someone "worse" than ourselves.

- But God does not judge us on our comparison with others. He compares us and our lives against what He want us to be...what He has taught us through the Church and through scripture.
- Certainly each person has his own spiritual variables—intelligence, understanding, environment, and the like.
- But to those who have had the privilege of hearing the Gospel, we remember His words: *To those whom much has been given, much is expected.*
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- Now “pride” is a multi-faceted thing. In our English language, there are different meanings to the word pride, so we have to differentiate.
- One can be “proud” of certain things—the achievements of your children, for instance.
- But the bad pride is the arrogant pride which looks down upon others, in which we think ourselves better than others.
- That’s what we see in the Pharisee in our Gospel today...a pride which is so contrary to love of neighbor.
- This is what is meant when God tells us through Scripture: *Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.* (Pro 8:13 RSV)
- With such strong language from God Himself, do we still insist elevating ourselves above our fellow man—who are ALSO God’s children?
- Are we judged by whether we richer or prettier or smarter or stronger than someone else? Absolutely not. We are only judged by our actions in this life—by what we DO, not what we have.
- If you’re the richest or smartest person...the most beautiful woman...the most powerful man—it avails you nothing if you

have not loved God and neighbor. The lowest and ugliest angel is smarter and more beautiful than you could ever hope to be.

- God gives us whatever strength or beauty or intelligence we have. As St. Paul tells us: *“What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?”* (1Cor 4:7)
- And whatever strength and beauty and intelligence we have only benefit us in the long run if we use them as they are meant to be used—to glorify God, and to edify and help our neighbor.
- That is why we were created...and that is ONLY how we will come to the glory and joy of Heaven.
- There is little that God loves more than humility...the person who is humble before God AND Man. This is true beauty.
- Pride led to the Original Sin, as we see when Satan—represented by the serpent--told Eve: *“...when you eat of [the forbidden fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God”* (Gen 3:5 RSV) ...and ever since then, we have tried to make ourselves our own god...or at least make Him in OUR image.
- Very often we priests and preachers will speak of making idols out of money, pleasure, etc.; but what we are really making idols of is ourselves. The money, pleasure, material things are simply offerings to that idol of self. IS there a greater pride or arrogance than that?
- The great sin of Pharaoh in Exodus was his arrogance. God tells him through Moses: *“How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?”* (Exo 10:3 RSV) And what happens? Plagues, death and destruction upon the Egyptians. This is meant to teach us.
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- Any doubts about God’s attitude toward the arrogant? How about:

- *The man of haughty looks and arrogant heart I will not endure. (Psa 101:5)*
- *Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate. (Prov 8:13)*
- *Everyone who is arrogant is an abomination to the LORD; be assured, he will not go unpunished. (Prov 16:5)*
- *Arrogance is hateful before the Lord and before men (Sir 10:7)*

- But humility is loved by both God and man.
- Whom do we admire more: the arrogant conceited person...or the humble, gracious and self-effacing one?
- And how God loves one who is meek and humble.
 - *“if my people...humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven... (2Ch 7:14 RSV)*
 - *He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. (Psa 25:9 RSV)*
 - *“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble”*
 - *“this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.” (Isa 66:2 RSV)*
 - *“He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Mic 6:8 RSV)*
- And Jesus tells us:
 - *“...whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Mat 18:4 RSV)*
 - *And “blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*

- With such a promise from Christ himself, why are we so resistant to live humbly?
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- And so...in her love and concern for us, Church echoes St. Paul, who himself echoes the Holy Spirit, when he writes:
- *“I...beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all...”*
(Eph 4:1-6)

Reading 1

[Sir 35:12-14, 16-18](#)

The LORD is a God of justice,
who knows no favorites.
Though not unduly partial toward the weak,
yet he hears the cry of the oppressed.
The Lord is not deaf to the wail of the orphan,
nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint.
The one who serves God willingly is heard;
his petition reaches the heavens.
The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds;
it does not rest till it reaches its goal,
nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds,
judges justly and affirms the right,
and the Lord will not delay.

[Ps 34:2-3, 17-18, 19, 23](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (7a) The Lord hears the cry of the poor.

I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall be ever in my mouth.
Let my soul glory in the LORD;
the lowly will hear me and be glad.

R. The Lord hears the cry of the poor.

The LORD confronts the evildoers,
to destroy remembrance of them from the earth.
When the just cry out, the Lord hears them,
and from all their distress he rescues them.

R. The Lord hears the cry of the poor.

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted;
and those who are crushed in spirit he saves.
The LORD redeems the lives of his servants;
no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him.

R. The Lord hears the cry of the poor.

[2 Tm 4:6-8, 16-18](#)

Reading 2

Beloved:

I am already being poured out like a libation,

and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have competed well; I have finished the race;

I have kept the faith.

From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me,
which the Lord, the just judge,
will award to me on that day, and not only to me,
but to all who have longed for his appearance.

At my first defense no one appeared on my behalf,
but everyone deserted me.

May it not be held against them!

But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength,
so that through me the proclamation might be completed
and all the Gentiles might hear it.

And I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

The Lord will rescue me from every evil threat
and will bring me safe to his heavenly kingdom.

To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

[Lk 18:9-14](#)

Gospel

Jesus addressed this parable
to those who were convinced of their own righteousness
and despised everyone else.

"Two people went up to the temple area to pray;
one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector.

The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself,

'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity --
greedy, dishonest, adulterous -- or even like this tax collector.
I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.'

But the tax collector stood off at a distance
and would not even raise his eyes to heaven
but beat his breast and prayed,

'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'

I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former;
for whoever exalts himself will be humbled,
and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."