

November 5, 2017 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Humble yourself and be exalted!

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

Psalm 131:1-3

1 Thess 2:7b-9,13

Matthew 23:1-12

The prophet Malachi reminds the Israelites that the Lord of hosts is the great King and should be given glory and praise and be feared because of his awesome power. If this is not taken to heart the people's blessing becomes a curse. Many have already turned aside from the way, show partiality, and have caused others to falter by faulty instruction and this can cause faith with one another and the covenant to be broken.

The psalmist acknowledges, in his prayer, that he is not proud, does not have haughty eyes, and does not busy himself with things too sublime. In this way he has stilled and quieted his soul. His hope is in the Lord now and forever.

Paul tells the Thessalonians how beloved they are to the Christian community. The disciples shared themselves and worked very long hours and their word was received not just as human but truly the word of God, now active and working in each believer.

Jesus tells the crowd to be discriminating in observing some religious leaders who give correct advice but don't follow it themselves. The greatest must serve the rest and do it in a humble way, and not by laying burdens upon others.



The Father is glorified by the Son's humility,
The Holy Spirit prompts us to act similarly.

Listen and Learn

The clear advice given by Jesus is that the greatest must serve the rest. While we may associate the "great" with bishops, presidents, CEO's, kings, and powerful rulers, we need to remind ourselves that we all have some kind of power over others. We are parents over children, managers over employees, teachers over students and the like. In each case we are called to exercise authority in a just, humble, and truthful way and so set the example. And most important, our words and actions are to be consistent. If you preach to others in any way, you must practice what you preach.

The words of the Sacred Scriptures are "spirit and life," (John 6:63) and cannot be understood by merely using human standards. We hear them in quietude at church and they will affect us positively when accepted with humility and faith. Too often we are willing listeners to a culture that has lost touch with the Spirit; it is a culture that promises temporal things of little value, and is in contrast with the Lord's promise of things most excellent and everlasting. Listen attentively and meditate upon what you hear. *If you love listening, you will learn, if you pay attention, you will become wise.* (Sirach 6:33)

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