

“Humility” Tuesday March 3, 2015

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The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but, whoever humbles himself will be exalted. From the Gospel of Matthew.

Have you ever had that feeling God is trying to tell you something?

About three years ago, right in the middle of my Diaconate studies, I got that feeling. It was the first of the year, January, and I was compelled to make some new year’s resolutions, and after praying about it, I chose to focus on “Humility”. I was prompted by a course we had in the Diaconate the previous semester which included “virtues”, of which humility was one.

Now, without going into more detail than you want to know, let’s just say that as a former broadcast personality, it was a “Humbling exercise”!

That is what Jesus is talking about today in the Gospel from Matthew.....”whoever exalts himself will be humbled, but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

This was counter to everything most of us were taught and learned isn’t it? It was back in Jesus day too....just like many of the things Jesus taught.

You see, Jesus was different. Almost everything he taught just flew in the face of the Jewish culture of which he was a part. Just think about it.

He came not to be served, but to serve.

Whoever saves his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

Pray for those who persecute you.

Pray for your enemies.

And the list goes on and on in the Gospel.....we hear it over and over again every Sunday in Mass.

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Scriptures tell us that Jesus, though he was the Son of God, chose to be a “suffering servant”.

Always putting others before himself....and not putting just anyone before himself either.....he put the poor....the blind....the lame....the sick...the hungry....the children.....and yes.....the sinners.....like me and you.

The most humble human ever to walk the face of the earth.....just think about it....the Son of God....True God....True man. The only human ever truly worthy of being exalted....worthy of being a king.....being given a throne.....chose instead to put others first.

That’s our lesson today!

To remember that he accepted the condemnation of his own people.....during his passion.....in perfect humility.....not to fight back..... or even defend himself in any way.

He chose instead, to carry our sins with the cross up the hill to Calvary.

To bare our sins as he was nailed to that cross.....was lifted up in humiliation for all to see....

And...as if this was not enough.....with what was almost his last breath....in a final act of humility.....he put even his persecutors before himself, when he ask his father to “Forgive them, for they know not what they do”!

And then.....our Savior..... died on that cross..... along with our sins.....

Our savior..... with his final act of humble sacrifice.....

Gave his life to earn us a place in heaven!

(Pause)

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You know, I'm still working on that New Year's resolution.....but its' morphed into more than I ever intended it to be..... more meaningful....more beneficial.....and yes more humbling than I ever thought possible.

For when I compare my insignificant life struggles, challenges and tribulations.....I realize that's just what they are.....insignificant.....compared to His.....

And rightfully so.....because it taught me that because of Jesus sacrifice, now we don't have to suffer as he did.... just to be humble! We don't have to endure the agonies he did to put others first.

And on top of that, if we do begin the journey to do so....to humble ourselves for the good of others.....he'll even help us.....guide us.....strengthen us....and show us the way.....if we but ask.

In practical terms.....I did make a discovery that helps me focus on others.....I hope it will help you do the same...and remind all of us to start the journey.....the journey to become the humble servant Jesus wants each one of us to be.

The simple statement is this:

Humility is not thinking less of yourself.....it's just thinking of yourself....less!

May God be with us on our journey!