

Living with Humility

The Advent season invites us to meditate on our lives in preparation for the birth of Christ. One of the predominant themes in the daily readings for Mass have been about humility. Therefore, allow me to offer this reflection on living with humility.

What is humility? Humility is a virtue by which a Christian acknowledges that God is the author and source of all good; it avoids inordinate ambition or pride. Voluntary humility can be described as “poverty of spirit.” (CCC 2546) Why should Christians live with humility? Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3) Bible commentaries have interpreted ‘the poor in spirit’ as “the lowly and humble.” Therefore, living with humility is tantamount to living in a state of blessedness. What does it profit a Christian to live in humility? Let’s take a look at what scripture tells us:

1. “Every proud heart is an abomination to the LORD; be assured that none will go unpunished” (Proverbs 16:5).
2. “My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit; a contrite, humbled heart, O God, you will not scorn” (Psalm 51:19).
3. “Clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but bestows favor on the humble.’ So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1Peter 5:5-6).

What these verses tell us is that God does not suffer (i.e., tolerate) the creature that exalts itself against Him, whether they be angels or humans, believers or unbelievers. On the other hand, God bestows His favor on the humble – those who please Him by living in humility. Mary’s Magnificat corroborates this truth: “He (God) has cast down the mighty from their thrones but have lifted up the lowly” (Luke 1:52).

One of my favorite Psalm verses is the instruction, “In vain is your earlier rising, your going later to rest, you who toil for the bread you eat, when He pours gifts on His beloved while they slumber” (Psalm 127:2). As I ponder over this psalm, I can’t help but think that it is on those who are humble that God pours His gifts while they sleep.

How can Christians practice humility in the right way?

1. The first step is to recognize that our right relationship with God can only be based on humility – by being humble before God and by walking humbly with God (cf. Micah 6:8). St. Benedict tells us that the first degree of humility is to be mindful of all that God has commanded.
2. Humility has to do with not thinking too highly of ourselves, nor thinking too lowly of ourselves. True humility has nothing to do with low self-esteem. A person who humbles himself inappropriately and out of place and can be annoying and could actually be committing the sin of pride through acts of false humility. Rather, we must be honest and realistic about who we are, what we are and what we are capable of. It is not a sin to be praised by others who speak truthfully of the good things that we have done; but at the same time, a humble person channels the praise and glory to God.
3. A great case study of humility is St. Paul: In 2Corinthians 11:16-29, St. Paul boasts about his labors and hardships in comparison to those he called “super apostles.” Some people think that St. Paul had spoken pridefully. But St. Paul concludes in v30: “If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.” He sums it all up by saying, “Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2Corinthians 12:10). This is a beautiful expression of St. Paul’s humility; he does it by acknowledging that the source of his spiritual strength is Christ.

耶穌聖名華人天主堂
THE HOLY NAME of Jesus CHINESE CATHOLIC MISSION
5395 Light Circle NW, Norcross GA 30071 678-691-3261 hnojatl.org
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PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS



Attention children and parents: No Sunday School class this Sunday, December 15, but rehearsal for the Sunday School Christmas Pageant will be on December 22.

Mass at Midnight on December 24 will begin at 11:30pm. Mass on Christmas Day and Sunday School Christmas Pageant will begin at 10:30am. Mass will be followed by Potluck, Santa Claus, Christmas

Program and raffle.

Attention parents and gift-givers! Please remember to bring your Christmas gifts on Christmas Day and place them under the Christmas tree in the social hall. This way, Santa Claus will have your gifts ready to give away!



On December 21, Saturday, Fr. Wu Biao will lead our Advent retreat.

The Advent retreat begins at 10:00 am and ends at 4:00 pm. Lunch will

be provided at noon. The next day, Sunday, Fr. Wu will preside over the Sunday mass and will do a sharing with everyone after

Mass. For planning purposes, we need a count of how many people are attending the Advent retreat so that we can prepare the lunch. Please sign up with Xu Chunying.

Also on December 21, Saturday, Fr. Ren Dahai will be dropping by our church at 4:00pm to share with us the current Catholic situation in Tangshan Diocese. We have made dinner reservations at 5:30pm for Fr. Wu and Fr. Ren. If you would like to attend the dinner, please sign up with Xu Chunying.

Prayer List: Liu Guifang, Lydia Chen, Lu Shumi, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing, Pan Bohao and Xu Taicheng.

| Mass Schedule | Confessions | Bible Study |
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| Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese) | Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM | Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese) |
| Sundays 2:00 PM (English) | Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM | Mondays 6:00 PM (English) |
| | By Appointment | |
| Mondays 12:00 PM (English) | | Eucharistic Adoration |
| Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English) | Anointing of the Sick | Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM |
| Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese) | First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass | Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM |
| Fridays 12:00 PM (English) | | |
| First Friday 7:00 PM (English) | | |
| First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese) | | |