



## October 24, 2010

### The Thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

“O God be merciful to me a sinner.”—Luke 18: 13

Dear Friends;

I would like to begin by thanking all who helped to make our *Fall Festival and Craft Faire 2010* a smashing success. Sr. Barbara and all the members of our family faith formation who help coordinate the event deserve our heartfelt thanks. It was a great day for building us up as a family in Christ. Thank you one and all!

When he found out that he was dying Cardinal Basil Hume, the Archbishop of Westminster in London, told his friend Bishop John Crowley,

*“If only I could start all over again, I would be a much better monk, a much better abbot, a much better bishop. But then I thought how much better if I can come before God when I die –not to say that I was such a good monk, good abbot, good bishop, but rather, ‘God be merciful a sinner.’ For, if I come empty-handed, then I will be ready to receive God’s gift.”*

Not long after Cardinal Hume died. At his funeral today’s reading from Luke—the parable of the Pharisee and tax collector—was read. Hume had come to realize the only proper way to come before God is in a spirit of emptiness.

Today’s readings invite us to cultivate a sense of humility before God and our sisters and brothers in the human family. That humility calls us to trust not in our own abilities but in God’s power to save and heal us. Without humility we can easily miss the power of God moving in our lives.

Some years ago there was a very funny movie called *Trading Places*. In the movie two wealthy tycoon brothers have a disagreement whether it is breeding or environment that makes a person what they are. So they set out to make an experiment. They will set up a promising young employee stock-trader (Dan Aykroyd) for a fall. In his place they will put a street person (Eddy Murphy) that they had encountered trying to run a scam on them.

The turn around in their fortunes make for good comedy. But there is also a lesson. Much of life is a random set of variables. We have no choice into what circumstances we are born. There are many givens such as intelligence, family, friends and experience that make us who we are. And we do not have much control over those circumstances.

We begin to realize that if we were given another set of circumstances we may behave just like the people we condemn. In the end the tycoons, who tried to play God and manipulate the circumstances of others’ lives, get there just dues. The men whose lives had been so radically changed decide to reverse the fortunes of the tycoons—*“for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

Today let us approach God and one another with humility and charity; for, we do not know the circumstances of another’s life until we have walked in their shoes. We are all equal in that we are sinners and one day we will die. It is better to go before God empty-hand so we can receive God’s gifts rather than being full of ourselves.

Peace,

*Ft Ron*