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Several years ago I was speaking to a Polish Capuchin, a type of Franciscan with a large hood after which Capuchin monkeys and the cappuccino coffee are named, who was soon to be ordained a priest and he was telling me about his friend who had been ordained a few months prior. He was in the confessional and afterwards a woman kissed his hands and he tried to pull away, saying, "Please don't, I'm not worthy." This wise and holy elder said to him, "You stupid young priest. Do you think I am kissing your hands because you are worthy? Of course you are unworthy. I am not kissing your hands because you are worthy but because you are a priest. That was given to you as a gift and not because you are worthy, and it should remind you of how unworthy you are!" Now, I am not suggesting you begin trying to remind me all the time of how unworthy I am, but this woman knows something about the virtue of reverence.

You see, the first Sunday of February is known as Scout Sunday marking the founding of the Scouts in February of 1910. The Scout oath explicitly mentions God, "On my honor, I will do my best, to do my duty, to God and my country, and to obey the Scout Law, to help other people at all times, to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight." The Scout Law in mentioned is, "A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent." It mentions reverence, the theme of Scout Sunday, and the topic I would like to address today.

Reverence is a virtue that all Christians should maintain. Reverence inclines us to show honor and respect to those to whom it is owed, such as parents, teachers, police officers, the bishop, or God and the holy things associated with him, such as being reverent in the church, that is, God's house. For the Polish woman, it included showing a particular type of respect to the priest who had absolved her, not because of who he was by birth, but because by his very role as a chosen by God, as priest, he had a connection to God. Likewise, when we look around here, this is might look like just a slab of stone, except that it is connected with God. Father Bob and I don't have friends over for dinner and eat off of it. This building is just a building except that it was consecrated, soaked in oils during its consecration, to God and has a type of dignity. Every few months with LifeTeen we have Guy's Night, an excuse to run around the rest of the building playing games shooting people with Nerf guns, but this space is off limits. Or that is no mere chalice is no mere cup, as it has been blessed, so to steal it would not just be theft but sacrilege. God is a Loving Father, but He is still God and we are still creatures. Do we show him the reverence he is due, not just by worshipping him every Lord's Day, but by maintaining a spirit of reverence around holy things and always worthily preparing for Holy Communion?

The same thing can be said of countless other relationships in our lives. As children, our parents and teachers are put over us and by that very arrangement deserve a type of respect. (Parents and school teachers, you can thank me later, or better yet, thank God for the Fourth Commandment.) Such respect flows to civil authorities as well, so that we always maintain respect for, as I said, police officers, or even the president, despite the fact that we might

disagree with some or many of with his or maybe someday her performance. Certain basic forms of reverence and respect remain due to the nature of the office the person holds.

Such reverence is necessary both for proper ordering of life, as no home can function if children are constantly disobeying, society cannot function if no one follows the law, and Church cannot function if no one humbles themselves to honor God. An enemy of reverence is pride, which inflates our own ego to say, "You are not different than me in some way." I've heard it before, "My parents are not superior to me. Who gives them the right to ground me?" God. Or, "People need to earn my respect." While true sometimes, other forms of respect are granted by the very nature of the relationship. This is why Saint Paul tells us today, "Love is not pompous; love is not inflated." We must humble ourselves to truly love another.

Scouts serve our society by striving to maintain this virtue of reverence, showing us all how we are to live in relationship with God and with one another. We do well to examine how well we all live this virtue. May God bless you.