



St. Joseph Catholic Church
Nome, AK 99762
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30th Sunday Year C 10.23.2016

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| | St. Joseph | St Francis | St. Anne |
| Sunday | \$1209.00 | \$ | \$0.00 |
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Psalm 51:1-2
 Have mercy on me, O God,
 according to your unfailing
 love; according to your great
 compassion blot out my
 transgressions. Wash away all
 my iniquity and cleanse me from
 my sin.

31 days to
HUMILITY
 a necessary journey
 of tongue-biting
 and pride-squashing

Greed, Vanity, and Pride

Pride truly is the roots of all evil and every person fights with pride. Look at the frantic pursuit, so typical of our times, so many people pretend and appear to be a certain way: to have the look, the dress, the image, but in reality, it is meaningless. It does not bring us any true gain. It leaves the soul restless as we read today about the Praying Pharisee (Luke 18: 9 -14). He compares himself with the sinners and sees himself with "The Look." Yet, it is meaningless for he compares himself to himself; he does not compare himself with God's expectations.

So many are like this Pharisees. They compare themselves to the earthly standards and see if they match. Hence they are anxious about life for many realize they don't even compete with the worldly expectations and so struggle all the more.

Jesus created a different set of expectations and instead of comparing ourselves with beauty queens and athletic kings, he speaks of humility. He tells us to repent of our pride. He exposes our false expectations and asks us to humble ourselves and allow God's grace to heal us. The only way that God's grace can heal is if we pray: Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Look at King Herod. Some thought Jesus was John, but the king repeated: "John I beheaded; so who is this about whom I hear such things?" He was restless just as his father, Herod the Great, who was fearful when the Wise Men came to worship Jesus – the new born king. His pride incited him to destroy the children and scare everyone in Bethlehem.

Who are we? Are we King Herod who protects and empowers himself through pride and power? Are we a Pharisee who compares himself to others and inflates his ego thinking that he is better than others because his vanity hides his true sin – pride? Or are we the repentant sinner who admits to himself his weakness and asks for help?

Being restless in life can be good. It can be bad too. The good one, which is the restlessness of the Holy Spirit, which the Holy Spirit gives us, unsettles our soul in order that we do something good. That is we change. We repent. We convert. In other words, we redirect our lives to do good things, to move forward.

The bad type of restlessness is born of a guilty conscience as Herod's was, as was the Pharisees. He justified himself acknowledging the sins he did not commit, but did not see the sin he was committing – self-righteousness.

Both had a guilty conscience, and that is why they were anxious because they had done bad things and did not have peace of mind, so that every time their conscience tried to expose their sinfulness they crushed it. Any and every event that seemed to threaten them, they either attacked the person who threatened them or they vilified the person making themselves feel better and more important. Are these behaviors any different than the bullies and snipes of today who promote their own agenda and their own egos?

The person who harms others has a guilty conscience and cannot live in peace within. They are restless. They are tormented. They are tormented by the roots of evil: greed, vanity and pride. These three leave you without peace of conscience, and all three prevent you from repenting and finding peace. We are at war not with nations, or groups, or even people. We are at war within ourselves. We fear being alienated from our sin for our sin has somehow become our security blanket.

Yet, the restlessness of our conscience which makes us feel the pull to break free from our favorite vice is the grace of God empowering us to pray: Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Until we admit our restlessness and feel its power, we will not change. We will not transcend from our ego. We will be chained to the greed, vanity and pride that empower us to be self-righteous.

: "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity!" Vanity is merely makeup. It is driven by pride which causes greed which in turn feeds our vanity. These render our soul sick, because one puts makeup on in order to invent, appear, and pretend; but in the end what does he gain? One is not yet healed!

Jesus challenges us today. He makes us look within. It is not merely the good we do, nor that acts of charity that we perform. He wants us to look at what we don't do. He wants us to see what our motives are. He wants to expose to us the inner motivation and intention so that we realize what we do; how we do it; and why we do it; is not for personal gain, but to be transformed within, converted; so that we can change not just our life, but the lives of those we love.

Announcements

Fr Tom will be in Kodiak from Oct 11 – 24
 Fr. Tom meets with KIC concerning the sale of St. Francis Church to KIC

Nov 6: Religious Ed 11:30 – 2:30 PM.

Nov 6 Youth Group 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Oct 30th Holy Hour from 12 to 1:00 PM to pray.



Humility is the source of true love for through it we admit we need the love of others to survive and we need to love others to nourish our love. Jesus loves us because of our sins. He reaches out and sees our pathetic lives and empathizes with our wretchedness. His grace transforms us and once transformed, we reach out to others in sympathy offering them the same healing touch we received.



O Father give me the humility to recognize my ignorance, admit my mistakes, recognize my neediness, welcome advice, accept rebuke. Help me to praise rather than criticize, to sympathize rather than criticize, to build rather than destroy. Help me to see the best in others and accept them even at their worst. Help me to be my best and forgive me when I am at my worst.



Weekly Schedule:

| Date | Mass Time | Place | Feast Day | Lector/Minister | Intention | Activity |
|-------------|-----------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Mon Oct 24 | No Mass | | | | Marian Sisters | |
| Tue Oct 25 | No Mass | | | | Christ King Srs | 6:00 PM Bible Study |
| Wed Oct 26 | 5:30 PM | | | | Paul Etienne | 6:00 PM Rosary |
| Thur Oct 27 | 5:30 PM | | | | Bishop Chad | |
| Fri Oct 28 | 8:00 AM | | | | Vocations | |
| Sat Oct 29 | 5:30 PM | Nome | 31 st Sunday | | St. Jude Parish | |
| Sun Oct 30 | 10:30 AM | Nome | 31 st Sunday | | St. Joseph Parish | Holy Hour |

**Prayer does not change a thing.
It changes people.
And they change things.**

**The Lord will rescue me from every evil threat
and will bring me safe to his heavenly kingdom.
To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Center Point

Focusing on the faults of others allows us to malign, vilify, and slander them, while we justify our own defects. Aggrandizing ourselves in comparison to others empowers us to think highly of ourselves and proves that we are better. When we prove ourselves better than others, we absolve ourselves from treating them poorly. Each person deserves our respect, dignity, and worth. If we find fault with them, it is difficult to treat them well.

This false justification is in our hearts and is the downfall of the Christian religion. If we are going to be Christian, we cannot judge others no matter how evil they may appear. We observe their behavior and determine if it is in accord with our Christian ideal. However, each person deserves to be treated as Christ treated the sinners and Satanists. He always accepted them and invited them to love Him and receive his mercy. Should we not do the same?

Some Christians, however, denigrate and disparage others because their faults are so obvious and blatant. Some Christians eagerly enjoy proving themselves better because then they are better. We must be careful never to fall into this self-righteous mindset for it is trickery. Self-righteousness leaves us feeling good about ourselves, but in reality, we are no better than before. We have not converted our hearts, changed our attitudes, and learned that the Lord wants compassion not condemnation. Jesus came forgiving us of our sins. He did not come judging, criticizing, and condemning us.

In the parable about praying, Jesus compares the two men praying. One is egocentric and the other is Christo-centric. As we read, we clearly grasp that the egocentric form of meditation is self-destructive. When focusing our prayer upon ourselves, we compare and compete to make ourselves appear better. We praise ourselves and create a self-righteous attitude.

Self-centered, we reflect on our goodness compared to the horrible evils of others. Justified by our own judgments, we become the measure of holiness and happiness for others and ourselves. As Archbishop Fulton Sheen remarks, "That is why subjectively, though not objectively, the more we inflate our ego the less important God seems to be" (Sheen. *Way/Peace*. p. 30).

This selfish, self-centered attitude has caused the greatest harm and hurt for humanity. Selfishness destroys the very soul and spirit of the person and every person to whom he is related. Self-centered prayer proves our worth and dignity as a person and entitles us to determine the good or bad, the right or wrong, and the moral or immoral of others. We become the center of our prayer. Centering our prayer upon ourselves gives us license to judge.

Self-righteousness is self-fulfilling. It predicts with perfect accuracy the faults and failures of others for we are the judge and jury. "The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity--greedy, dishonest, adulterous--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income'" (Luke 18: 10 - 12). In contrast to this egocentric, self-righteous attitude, only the needy and naked realize their inadequacy.

Man is inadequate to save himself from his faults and failures. Recognizing our need for help, we turn to God. Yet, "To turn to God means, first of all, to enter into one's self. There is no

conversion without this turning to one's own core-to one's heart or conscience" (John Paul II Homily Feb 12, 1986). Prayer reads our minds and hearts, our deepest desires and hungers. Here in the depths of our inner being, we realize we cannot be the center of our prayer. We need God because we are so inadequate.

Our minds comprehend and conceive infinite goodness, but we should also understand that we are not the originators of absolute goodness and truth. God is. We are only instruments to adhere and promote his goodness; we cannot use God's goodness to lord it over others. We are to share it with others.

Those who lord it over others eventually become empty. They have nothing but themselves for everyone abandons their self-righteous activism. They parade themselves as good, but as Jesus reminds us, only God is good, we merely participate in God's goodness.

We cannot be self-righteousness for we know deep within our own hearts that we are broken. We are not always good and we should not pretend or impersonate goodness. In our prayer, we hear the voice of God revealing the truth about ourselves. In this quiet arena, we see our ugliness and weakness. We feel the power of evil and its corruptive and corrosive force. We observe the power of pride and our lust for vainglory. We know we too are a sinner and are in need of God's mercy.

Instead of trying to prove our self-worth through self-righteousness, God becomes the center point of our lives and that central point gives us true human worth and spiritual significance. We are by nature good. We do not have to prove our worthiness to God. He knows us and loves despite our weaknesses and feebleness. He accepts us as we are. Yet, He calls us to conversion: a change of heart which only grace can perform.

God stabilizes our lives. He gives us prospect and possibility for we know that with Him at our side we can deal with the worries, anxieties, hurts, and pains of life. However, when we place ourselves at the center point, we become disquiet, distressed, damaged and depressed. We find solace only placing ourselves above our weakness -- never admitting them.

This self-righteous attitude creates antagonism against God and others. We become hypocritical of others and very sanctimonious about ourselves. However, divine righteousness comes from humility. Humility is truth. It is the truth about our self and the truth about God. When we envision the infinite love, beauty, truth, and goodness of God, we humble ourselves knowing how insignificant we are. Yet, we are so grateful to God that He would humble Himself and take on the form of a human to save us from our disgrace.

Only in humility will we be significant. Humility teaches us that we do not have to prove our greatness for God is great. We share in his greatness. Through prayer, He infuses Himself in us and we take on the attributes of God. No longer do we have to earn and gain prestige. We see the light of God's presence dwelling within us.

If we desire to love God and our fellow man, we must be humble. The proud of heart love no one other than himself and no one loves him except himself. Humility, however, creates love for others because it looks to see the painful truth of our human condition. We are all sinners. We all need the grace of God's redeeming love. Humility opens the door of true remorse for our own sins and true compassion for the sins of others.