

Christ Our Hope Catholic Church

Faith In Laity Corner



31st Sunday Ordinary Times

Reading: Malachi 1:1-8, Mt.23

Humility Leading?

There has been an old adage which states *'Pride comes before the fall'*. Well, this 31st Week of Ordinary times us of this true fact and tends to focus on those of us in leadership positions. Who leads? We all do in some way or other, we maybe leaders in our homes, workplaces, groups, clubs, team or in our communities. We may have to answer for millions of people or just a few; but we do have a leadership position. How do you lead? What is your leadership style? I guess this week we examine some of the fine points of leadership. As we draw close to the end of our church liturgical year, there is a call for us to reflect on what has been happening in our lives. What has to change and what can we work on for improvement. The reading from the Old Testament prophet Malachi presents us with a dire warning to leaders.... To all of us.

"And now, priests, this commandment is for you:" (Mal.2:1)

God used Malachi (which means *messenger of God*) to send a direct edict to the leadership of the Jewish community, at that time and even in the times of Jesus it would be the priests.

*"And if you do not take to heart
giving honor to my name, says the LORD of hosts..." (Mal.2:2)*

Question to us- Are we in our leadership role bringing others to honor the Name of God? In our life do we set an example of fair play, humility and respect? What words leave our mouth at the lounge, car park, games, around the table? God says if you do not bring along the Spirit of God in you to all you meet- there are some consequences.

*"I will send a curse upon you
and your blessing I will curse." (Mal. 2:2)*

Life will surely catch-up with you! All that you have surrounding your life will become a curse to you, and even what God will send for you will lead to your destruction. How often have we seen God has given others great gifts, and it lead to their demise? This is what God is talking about when even the good gifts will not bring joy to your heart. As leaders, we must take care that our example may

"Have caused many to stumble by your instruction." (Mal.2:8)

As leaders, we are not to excuse ourselves as *'everything is about us'*, **leader** means we have the responsibility to seek the good of others with humility. It becomes our duty to lead people towards God, and not through our words, actions and treatment push them to lose sight of God.

"But you have turned aside from the way," (Mal. 2:8)

Leaders in our own right, our prayer life and spiritual clarity has to be reviewed or we can lead others to become lost, and be a destructive force. The Gospel continues in the same vane.

"The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses." (Mt. 23:2)

The Scribes and Pharisees represented the leaders of the society at that time, and were the authorities of the religious laws and practices of the Jewish people. They interpreted, pronounced judgement on the laws and either selected to allow people into the worshipping community or to remain outcasts. Yet the advice of Jesus is:

*"Do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you,
but do not follow their example.
For they preach but they do not practice. (Mt. 23:3)*

Our role as setting the pace as others will follow what we do, over what we say... (*talk is cheap/fake too*)

*“All their works are performed to be seen.
They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels.” (Mt.23:5)*

Our leadership cannot be for the ‘show’, it has been to from the heart. Our looks, money, prestige are not of value, without humility. Our life and salvation may well depend on the quality of our leadership in our homes, church, on our jobs, community and truly, in with our federal government. It is important that we have a duty to remain humble and prayerful as we ask God’s guidance in the role of leader. ***Let us pray for our leaders to lead with integrity and humility.***

As I am writing this reflection, we are faced with another mass fatal shooting in San Antonio, Texas. There is no end to the tragedies that are occurring almost weekly. AS people of God, we have to be vigilant in our steadfast prayer, as there is no end, but through the mercy of God. May we, who are leaders ask God for humility and honesty in dealing with others.

Faith in Laity Corner is a weekly review of Sunday’s readings written by

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