

Pastor's Letter

October 26, 2025—30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

In our Gospel reading for today we meet two people in prayer and we are told that one of them goes home justified, that is to say, in a right relationship with God, and the other doesn't. And the one who goes home justified before God isn't the one we might expect. It isn't the morally upright Pharisee, it's the sinful tax collector who is reconciled to God. Why? Because the Pharisee doesn't ask.

The Pharisee in Jesus' parable fasts, he tithes, he keeps the commandments. He is even grateful to God for his state in life. But he fails to recognize that the possibility of eternal life lies open to us, not because we are so good, but because God is. None of us begins to approach the level of holiness necessary for us to earn the right to heaven. All of us depend on the mercy of God. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast." (Eph. 2:8-9) The Pharisee suffers from the kind of pride that thinks I can force God to give me what I want by being good. This is a trap that many well-intentioned people who pursue holiness fall into. But, news flash: God doesn't owe us anything.

This temptation to self-righteousness is not a problem for the tax-collector. He knows who he is and that, left to his own abilities, he can't save himself. He has to rely on God's grace and mercy. It seems that he has lots of faults, but pride is not one of them, and a healthy, humble realism about where we stand in relation to God's perfection is the key to being open to receive the gift of our salvation. We know we need God's help, and we are not too proud to ask for it. And when we ask with true sorrow for our sins, we will receive it.

Blessings,

Fr. Scott



Tables will set up in the vestibules of the churches starting October 25 for you to bring a picture of your deceased loved ones. All are welcome to participate.

Picture pick up will be November 29 & 30.

