

## HOMILY FOR THE 30<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1. Imagine two people walking into church at the same time
  - a. One is finely dressed, he drove up in a nice car, he is friendly and outgoing
    - i. Maybe he has been around long enough that we see him as very generous
    - ii. He participates widely in the community
    - iii. Never hear him swearing or be violent
  - b. At the same time a panhandler, guy with a sign I will work for food
    - i. He is not going to be finely dressed, probably keeps to himself
    - ii. Know that he uses rough language
  - c. Who would you be most tempted to tell your children, that is the kind of person you should be
2. going into a large Church where you see and hear these two men without being noticed
  - a. Over hear the finely dressed man say thank you God for making me a wise and intelligent person
    - i. Because you have been so good to me, I give half my income to worthy causes
    - ii. I am not violent, I do not swear
    - iii. Because you have been so good to me, I am going to give a big check to that beggar over there so he can become an honest man, instead of always begging
  - b. Then you hear the beggar say
    - i. Lord have mercy on me a sinner
      1. I have not tried to find work, I have been using bad language
      2. I have misused the money given to me
    - ii. Forgive me Lord
3. This is just another retelling of the story Jesus tells
  - a. Pharisees were the good and holy people of their time
    - i. He is not lying when he says he fasts twice a week and gives generously to poor
    - ii. They made a point of not swearing or cheating
    - iii. Most of us would be a long way from living as good a lifestyle as the Pharisees
  - b. Tax collectors are not hated just because they work for the Romans which made them traitors
    - i. They were seen as gougers
    - ii. Roman officers told a tax collector, the Emperor wants 10% of each villager's property
      1. You collect whatever extra you want as a commission and we will back you up
4. In story these two people are praying to God

- a. One is thanking God for making him a good person
  - b. Thanks God for helping him do challenging acts of holiness
  - c. Feeling kind of proud of himself compared to that other person over there
  - d. That tax collector who can only pray for forgiveness
    - i. He cannot think of any excuses for his behavior
5. Shocking part of the story is question Jesus asks
- a. Who is going to be holy in God's eyes:
    - i. the one who is thankful to God for the good things God has helped him to do
    - ii. or the man who simply asks for mercy from God for all the evil he has done
6. Hard part of Jesus conclusion is that it is not easy for us to be humble to admit even to ourselves our failures
- a. I was reminded of the Mac Davis song : Lord it is hard to be humble when I am perfect in every way
    - i. The song is funny but it is a an exaggerated idea we tend to have in our minds
  - b. /we want ot be perfect in the eyes of everyone, it is not comfortable to be criticized for having failures
7. Irony of Jesus words is He is not telling us we have to add humility onto trying to be like the Pharisee
- a. What He really is saying relax
  - b. None of us are going t be perfect
  - c. None of us can be so good, that God owes us heaven
8. What Jesus wants for us is to just relax and say to God, I failed again please have mercy
- a. God loves us not for the hard work we do trying to be perfect people
  - b. He loves for who we are imperfect people not entirely sure what we are about
9. We are not going to get into heaven because of our hard work
- a. The biggest danger of being like a Pharisee is that we may not want to go there
  - b. If I have worked so hard at being a good person, do I really want to get the same reward that the tax collector is getting
  - c. Don't I deserve better
10. God will answer us, not really but come into heaven anyway, I am giving your everything anyway