

From the Pastor
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 7, 2022

PRIDE: THE ORIGINAL SIN

Today we will discuss Pride, the chief of the Seven Capital Sins.

The Third Mass Preface of Lent expresses to the Father the spirit we are to have as we “climb the holy mountain” towards Easter:

You ask us to express our thanks by self-denial.

We are to master our sinfulness and conquer our pride.

We are to show to those in need your goodness to ourselves.

The very real presence of the Devil and the *seven deadly sins* (pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice, gluttony, and lust) active in our world, are something to examine especially at this time of year. We should seek to eradicate them from our lives and let the goodness of almighty God shine forth. I hope to present all seven over the next few weeks; and likely into the Easter Season. I have taken great encouragement for this exposition from Fr. Robert Barron’s CD “Seven Deadly Sins / Seven Lively Virtues”, currently available in the Lighthouse Catholic Media display. If any of this echoes his presentation, I give him the credit!

Pride is the root of all sin which paves the road for all the others. It is the sin of Adam and Eve; the Original Sin. As we heard in the reading from Genesis on the First Sunday of Lent, at the prompting of the serpent, our first parents bought into the lie that they could be something greater than they were. They were lured into believing that they could be like God; even possibly being “competition” for Him. It was and always is a *disordered desire* to excel; a self-centered desire and not one of wanting to share in God’s power to be only good and do only good, but to have selfish advantage or power and control over others, which is evil.

Psychology tells us that whether one feels either inferior or superior to others, both are inferiority complexes. The former makes itself obvious, while in the latter, arrogance masks deep-down fears of inadequacy. To look at ourselves as somehow superior to others can be a very real temptation. When we are prideful, we want to be the center of our own destiny, rather than let God be the One who is Lord of all things, and seeing all others in His light.

“When man isolates self from God and the rest of humanity and makes self absolute or central, either ignoring all others or using them solely towards the achievement of his own private ends, he has the vice of pride... At the root of all such sins there is an exaggerated love and concern

for self that clouds one's knowledge and appreciation of the true self and the corresponding worth of others." (Catholic Encyclopedia)

To one degree or another, this sin exists in all of us; and typically in very subtle ways. Some examples of pride can even parade themselves as virtues. i.e.: when one is given a (well deserved) compliment, and in response puts him/herself down (false humility), rather than graciously say, "Thank-you," while explicitly or implicitly giving God the credit and glory for the gifts required to achieve whatever was accomplished.

"Scrupulous" individuals suffer from a variety of pride that does not allow God to be all merciful: in essence saying, "God is not powerful enough to forgive me or cover for my inadequacies and failings." The scrupulous says his unworthiness is larger than God. No matter how we think or feel, God is much greater than even the worst sin we can commit.

"Presumptuous" individuals exhibit the opposite attitude: acting as if that no matter what I do, God is going to forgive me. That everything I do (no matter how intrinsically evil) is justifiable and OK. The presumptuous person, in essence, "tells" God how to be God; can flaunt the laws of God and the Church, and legitimate authority. This is often manifested in what can be called the "...but I'm a good person..." syndrome; "God has to forgive me because I am wonderful." An egotistical attitude like that can be detrimental to one's eternal salvation.

Some other everyday examples of the sin of pride: self-absorption and vanity; easily taking offense; reaction to criticism and over-sensitivity; the craving for attention, adulation, and praise; having to have it "my way"; not taking legitimate praise (for the gifts that come from God working in you); not admitting mistakes; always talking about yourself/your children/grandchildren/your interests... and not really listening to others; being judgmental... the list goes on. We each have our particular "brands" of pride.

Yet, we have the capability to become something greater than we are only through the humble, obedient love of our Lord Jesus. Mary said to the angel, "Let it be done unto me according to thy Word." May our attitude be the same through her prayers, so that we too may make God #1 and share His Life in heaven.

OUR LADY'S LENT: In many places of the Church, it is the custom and tradition to keep a fast beginning on August 1st until August 15th. It is given the charming name of *Our Lady's Lent*. It is a fast in honor of Our Lady as we celebrate her principal feast of the year on August 15th, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I would encourage our parishioners to follow this ancient spiritual practice.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION: This year the Solemnity of the Assumption falls on a Monday Augusts 15th. Because the Solemnity falls on a Monday, there is no obligation to attend Mass. The Obligation is dispensed. Nonetheless, it is a day when many will want to honor Our Lady by attending Mass on her principal Feast of the year.

ST. PAUL'S PICNIC: Our annual parish picnic will be held on **Sunday, September 18th**. It will begin at 12 noon and all parishioners are most cordially invited to attend. How nice it will be to greet our friends and fellow parishioners

PARISH OFFICES: We remind you that as of January 2021 all parish offices have been relocated from the Rectory to the Lower Hall. There one may find the reception office, Religious Education office, Deacon Ray's office, and the pastor's office. The Rectory has served as the residence for the parish clergy. There are no longer offices there.

In Jesus and Mary
Monsignor James F. Pereda