

From the Pastor
Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 19, 2023

The Seven Capital Sins

Today we continue with our often-interrupted series on the seven capital sins. We have looked at **Anger** and **Lust**. Today we will consider **Pride**.

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.

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 read in the book of Genesis, 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. Instead of bringing them freedom, the original sin brought them slavery.

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.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST: Today our annual Pancake breakfast will be served after the 10.30 Mass by the Knights of Columbus and Squires. We are most grateful for this beautiful service on their part. Due to the unusual succession of nine rain-filled weekends through the end of summer and early autumn we were unable to have our annual picnic. But as a special treat, the Mr. Softie Truck, originally schedule for the picnic, will be with us today. There will be limitless ice cream for all at breakfast.

THANKSGIVING DAY: May God bless all of you then on Thanksgiving Day which is celebrated on Thursday of this week. Why not begin it in the right way by attending Holy Mass on **Thursday at 10.00AM?** *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God...It is right and just.* Please bring your offerings of food which will be blessed and distributed to the poor from our very own parish outreach. Thank you, Linda Curro and Outreach Staff, for all your devotion to Parish Outreach and St. Vincent de Paul. And may God eternal and blessed repose to Joe Curro who went home to God in February of this year.

In Jesus and Mary

Monsignor James F. Pereda