

Homily 31st Sunday Year A 2023

As Jesus calls out the Pharisees and Sadducees on their hypnotical way of living their faith the best way to avoid hypocrisy is honesty. If we live honest lives and encourage others to do the same, we will become much more aware of how God is present in the world, in people, in nature and in ourselves.

“An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the pay check, but the time was right and he was ready to hang up the hammer. His boss was disappointed as the carpenter had been a loyal and diligent worker for many years, so he was sad to see him go. He asked for one last favour, requesting that the carpenter could build just one more house before retiring. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, his boss came to inspect the house. As he was leaving, he handed the front door key to the carpenter. “This is your house,” he said, “my gift to you.” The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in a home he had built none too well.

What we put into our lives, what we feed our bodies and what we feed our minds are factors that affect the type of life we build. Honesty is a key factor in the life we build for ourselves. So, it is important to feed our minds with what is good and what is right. This will lead to right actions. Our life today is the result of our attitudes and choices in the past. Our life tomorrow will be the result of the attitudes and the choices we make today. Build your life wisely!

Pope Francis reminds us that humility, honesty and integrity go together. He says it is not enough then, to ask ourselves **how much** we pray; we must also ask ourselves **how** we pray. It is, therefore, important to examine our hearts and eradicate arrogance and hypocrisy.

Furthermore, we need to find the way back to our hearts and to rediscover the value of intimacy and silence amidst the frenetic pace of daily life because it is there, in our hearts that God meets us and speaks to us.

You can fool the hapless public,
you can be a subtle fraud,
you can hide your little meanness,
but you can't fool God!

You can advertise your virtues,
you can self-achievement laud,
you can load yourself with riches,
but you can't fool God!

You can criticize the Bible,
you can be a selfish clod,
you can lie, swear, drink, and gamble,
but you can't fool God!

You can magnify your talent,
you can hear the world applaud,
you can boast yourself somebody,
but you can't fool God!

A priest was preaching one Sunday.

"The sermon that I'm going to preach today is about honesty" Everyone nodded.

"Before I begin, I would like all those who have read Matthew chapter 29 verse 15 to raise their hands"

More than half the people raised their hand.

"That is very unfortunate because there are only 28 chapters in Matthew's Gospel"