

**FIRST READING**

The prayer of the humble will penetrate the heavens.

A reading from the book of Sirach

35:12b-14, 16-17

**T**he Lord doesn't have favorites,  
and you can't bribe him to cheat the poor.  
But he hears the prayers of all who have been mistreated.  
The Lord listens carefully to the prayers of orphans  
and the concerns of widows.

If you gladly obey God,  
your prayers will reach beyond the clouds.  
The prayers of the humble go right through the clouds,  
and they are never satisfied  
till their prayers reach God.

The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

34:1-2, 17-18

*R. (7a) The Lord hears the cry of the poor.*

I will always praise the Lord.  
With all my heart,  
I will praise the Lord.  
Let all who are helpless  
listen and be glad.

*R. The Lord hears the cry of the poor.*

When his people pray for help,  
he listens and he rescues them  
from their troubles.  
The Lord is there to rescue  
all who are discouraged  
and have given up hope.

*R. The Lord hears the cry of the poor.*

## SECOND READING

All that remains is the crown of righteousness reserved for me..

A reading from the second letter of Paul to Timothy

4:6-8

**N**ow the time has come for me to die.

My life is like a drink offering being poured out on the altar.  
I have fought well.  
I have finished the race,  
and I have been faithful.

So a crown will be given to me for pleasing the Lord.

He judges fairly,  
and on the day of judgment  
he will give a crown to me  
and to everyone else who wants him to appear with power.

## ALLELUIA

2 Corinthians 5:19

*R. Alleluia, alleluia.*

God was in Christ, to reconcile the world to himself;  
and the good news of reconciliation he has entrusted to us.

*R. Alleluia, alleluia.*

## GOSPEL

The tax collector went home justified, not the Pharisee.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke

18:9-14

**J**esus told a story to some people  
who thought they were better than others  
and who looked down on everyone else:

“Two men went into the temple to pray.  
One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.  
“The Pharisee stood over by himself and prayed,  
‘God, I thank you that I am not greedy, dishonest,  
and unfaithful in marriage like other people  
And I am really glad that I am not like that tax collector over there.  
I go without eating for two days a week,

and I give you one tenth of all I earn.’

“The tax collector stood off at a distance  
and did not think he was good enough  
even to look up toward heaven.

He was so sorry for what he had done  
that he pounded his chest and prayed,  
‘God, have pity on me!  
I am such a sinner.’ “

Then Jesus said, “When the two men went home,  
it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee  
who was pleasing to God.

If you put yourself above others,  
you will be put down.

But if you humble yourself,  
you will be honored.”

The gospel of the Lord.



**Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle C**

**Prayer:**  
Dear God,  
Please help us to focus on making ourselves better people and not on trying to impress others. In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen

**Readings:**  
Sirach 35:12b-14, 16-17  
Psalm 34: 1-2, 17-18  
Second Letter of Paul to Timothy 4:6-8  
Luke 18:9-14

**Reflection:**  
We all know people who act like they think they are better than everyone else. The Pharisee is like that in today's story. Jesus uses the two men to teach us about humility. The Pharisee talks to God about all of the good things he does and compares himself to the Tax Collector. The Tax Collector talks to God about the areas of his life where he needs help. He acknowledges that he isn't perfect and doesn't compare himself to others. Jesus said that the Tax Collector's prayer was God's favorite. God wants us to pray and to live our lives with humility, focusing on where we need help and on what we can do to be better people, not on impressing others. God wants us to go to Church, help others and be nice not to show others how good we are but so that we can continue to become better people. Not only will this make God happy but by not being a show-off more people will want to hang out with us and we gain more friends. This is contrary to what many people believe. Often, people think that to be popular they have to show-off all that they have and all that they do while putting others down, so that everyone will be impressed by them. This story teaches us that we only need to worry about what God thinks of us and becoming the best people we can be.

**Discussion:**

1. Is it fun to hang out with someone who thinks they are better than everyone else or who thinks they know-it-all?
2. Does being popular make someone a better person? Why or why not?
3. Does humility mean we should think we are not good? (No) Why?

**Activity:** Web of friendship – We gain friends by focusing on the good in others.  
Materials Needed: A ball of string  
Directions:

1. Have the class stand in a circle.
2. Give the ball of string to one child.
3. Have them hold on to the end.
4. Ask them to say something nice about a child in the circle across from them and then gently toss the ball of string to them while holding on to the end.
5. The child who catches the ball, holds the string where they caught it and then says something nice about a child across from them and tosses them the ball while continuing to hold onto the string where they caught it and while the first child continues to hold onto the end of the string.
6. The yarn continues to be tossed around the circle with each child holding onto a piece of it, creating a web of friendship.

