

## Fr. Martin's Reflection – August 31, 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,

Today's readings invite us to reflect deeply on the virtue of humility—the very foundation of the Christian life. In the book of Ecclesiastes, we hear this wisdom: *"The greater you are, the more you must humble yourself; so, you will find favor with the Lord."* These words remind us that in God's eyes, greatness is never about titles, wealth, or influence. Instead, it is about the posture of the heart. True greatness is found in lowering ourselves, in recognizing our dependence on God, and in treating others with reverence and love. Jesus takes this teaching further in the Gospel. At a banquet, He notices how people scramble for the best seats, each one eager to be seen as important. He turns this ordinary moment into a lesson about the Kingdom of God: *"Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."*

We know how tempting it can be to seek recognition—at work, in our families, even in our service to the Church. But Jesus warns us that when our lives revolve around self-promotion, we lose sight of what truly matters. The invitation of the Gospel is to take the lower place, not to be overlooked, but to make room for God to lift us up in His time. And Jesus doesn't stop there. He challenges us in a radical way: *"When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind."* In other words, love those who cannot repay you. Show kindness not because it will come back to you, but because that is how God loves—freely, generously, without conditions. This is the heart of true humility: giving without seeking anything in return.

So, brothers and sisters, the Word of God today asks us some important questions: In our daily lives, do we seek the first place, or are we willing to take the last? Do we serve only when it benefits us, or do we serve even when no one notices? Do we extend our love to those who cannot give back? Let us remember that Christ Himself showed us the way. Though He was God, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. And because of His humility, the Father exalted Him above every name. May we walk in that same humility, trusting that when we lower ourselves before God and before one another, He will raise us up to share in His glory.

### Praying for all who Labor in the Vinyard

**As the sun rises to bring in the new day:**

**We remember those who descend into the earth, their work begins in darkness, pulling from the earth the resources we steward. We remember those who work inside a building away from the light and brightness of the day. We remember those who work outside in the harsh elements of our world, the bitter cold and sweltering heat of extremes. We remember those who do not have a job to go to, who are struggling to meet the needs of their daily living expenses, for whom the day becomes long and arduous.**

**As the sun sets to bring in the evening of rest:**

**We remember those who work in the night. We remember those who are trying to recover from their labor and toils of the day. We remember those who participate in unsafe and dangerous work. We pray for a renewed sense of dignity in their lives and in their work. God, in your goodness, you have made a home for the worker. Make a place in our hearts for compassion to the men and women who labor tirelessly for basic necessities. Ensure a place for the men and women who are struggling to find work. Grant us your wisdom to greet and care for those who are unable to work due to illness or circumstances that prevent their participation. Be with the children who are not able to run and play but instead must put in a hard day's work to help their family afford to eat, to live. Be with us all, Christ Jesus, as we go about the busyness of our work. Hold us accountable not only for our actions, but most importantly to each of our neighbors. May we continue to work together to bring about your reign! We ask this in your holy name, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Have a safe, blessed, and fun Labor Day weekend.

*Fr. Martin*