

Fr. Simon Sez

In today's gospel (Luke 19:1-10) the people grumble against Jesus receiving Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, and staying at his house. Zacchaeus said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." Sometimes, people are quick to judge and to grumble about others without giving them the benefit of the doubt and finding out the facts first.

I asked an Australian seminarian staying with me why people in small towns are well known for gossip. He said they are bored. I suspect he is right. When somebody asked St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa) what she thought about St. Pope John Paul II not allowing women priests, she said, "I am too busy helping the poor to think about those things." Perhaps, we need to be busier being about the Lord's work rather than worrying about others, gossiping, and hurting others' reputations, whether or not the information we have about them is true.

As St. Paul to the Thessalonians in today's second reading (2 Thes 1:11-2:2), I pray for you always "that our God may make you worthy of his calling and powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every effort of faith, that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, in accord with the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ."

Inner Healing Prayer this Weekend in Our Parishes!:

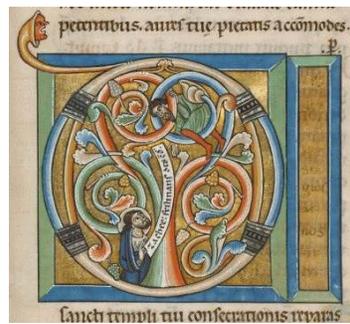
The Matthew Ministry will be giving an information presentation at St. Pius X Church Hall Friday evening 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., November 4, 2022, describing this simple prayer method. After this presentation, individuals can make an appointment with them

facilitating the prayer of the individual (45 minutes each) Saturday & Sunday, November 5 - 6 in our parishes. This guided prayer will help individuals go to the source of their hurts and receive the healing Spirit of Christ and be set free. For answers to specific questions, contact me. I have been offering this opportunity in my parishes since about fifteen years ago. For more general information go to: www.themattthewministry.com.



"I already diagnosed myself on the Internet. I either have three left kidneys, recurring puberty or Dutch Elm disease."

Lover of Souls: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time



Wisdom 11:22–12:2
Psalm 145:1–2, 8–11,
13–14
2 Thessalonians 1:11–2:2
Luke 19:1–10

Our Lord is a lover of souls, the Liturgy shows us today. As we sing in today's Psalm, He is slow to anger and compassionate toward all that He has made.

In His mercy, our First Reading tells us, He overlooks our sins and ignorance, giving us space that we might repent and not perish in our sinfulness (see Wisdom 12:10; 2 Peter 3:9).

In Jesus, He has become the Savior of His children, coming Himself to save the lost (see Isaiah 63:8–9; Ezekiel 34:16).

In the figure of Zacchaeus in today's Gospel, we have a portrait of a lost soul. He is a tax collector, by profession a "sinner" excluded from Israel's religious life. Not only that, he is a "chief tax collector." Worse still, he is a rich man who has apparently gained his living by fraud.

But Zacchaeus' faith brings salvation to his house. He expresses his faith in his fervent desire to "see" Jesus, even humbling himself to climb a tree just to watch Him pass by. While those of loftier religious stature react to Jesus with grumbling, Zacchaeus receives Him with joy.

Zacchaeus is not like the other rich men Jesus meets or tells stories about (see Luke 12:16–21; 16:19–31; 18:18–25). He repents, vowing to pay restitution to those he has cheated and to give half of his money to the poor.

By his humility he is exalted, made worthy to welcome the Lord into his house. By his faith, he is justified, made a descendant of Abraham (see Romans 4:16–17).

As He did last week, Jesus is again using a tax collector to show us the faith and humility we need to obtain salvation.

We are also called to seek Jesus daily with repentant hearts. And we should make Paul's prayer in today's Epistle our own: that God might make us worthy of His calling, that by our lives we might give glory to the name of Jesus.