



## ***30<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY of ORDINARY TIME YEAR C – October 27, 2019***

There is an ancient legend that dates all the way back to medieval times. It's about a young woman who died and went to heaven. Her life on earth had been bad - very bad.

When she arrived at the gates of heaven, she was told that she could be admitted only under one condition. She must return to earth and bring back the gift that God values above all other gifts.

The young woman returned to earth. There she thought and thought about what gift God values above all other gifts.

Then one day she came upon a young man who had just died for his faith in God. She thought to herself, "Surely this is the gift that God values above all else, - the blood of a martyr who has died for his faith."

So she took a drop of the young man's blood and brought it back to heaven. But when she presented it, she was told that there was something that God values even more than the blood of martyrs. Again, and again, she went back to heaven with all kinds of precious gifts. But each time she was told that there was still another gift that God values more highly.

Finally, one day, when she was about to give up, she came upon a child playing at a fountain. The child's face was beautiful and innocent. At that moment, a man on horseback rode up. He dismounted to get a drink at the fountain. When the man saw the child, he remembered his own childhood innocence.

Then he looked into the water and saw the reflection of his own face. It was ugly and hardened by time. As he stared at his image in the water, he suddenly realized how he had wasted the life that God had given him. At that moment, tears of repentance welled up in his eyes and rolled down his cheeks and fell into the fountain.

The young woman took one of the man's tears and brought it back to heaven. When she presented it, there was great joy among the angels and saints. This was, indeed, the gift God valued about all others: the tears of a repentant sinner.

The first Reading from Sirach (Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18), Paul's letter to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18) and the Gospel of St. Luke (Luke 18:9-14) remind us today that we can be justified before God in spite of our sins.

That happens each time we go to confession or make an act of contrition. For a few moments in silence, reflect on how you have changed since your last confession. Do your humble yourself before the Lord?

