

Initial Small Group Discussion

- Share within your group your observation of public sphere people who have demonstrated either great humility or considerable pride.
- What were the traits you associated with Humility and Pride?
- Be prepared to share one of the stories briefly with the larger group.

Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas

Angelic Doctor & Our Guide on this Journey

- *Grant O Merciful God that I might ardently desire, prudently examine, truthfully acknowledge, and perfectly accomplish what is pleasing to Thee for the Praise and Glory of Thy Name. Amen*

Happiness and Human Freedom



- All desire happiness; a first principle
- Freedom is in choosing the means...**we are masters of our own actions by reason of our being able to choose this or that. But choice regards not the end but the means to that end, as the Philosopher says....(I, 82, 1,) these means are individual goods which have not a necessary connection to happiness, because without them a man can be happy...**
- *All desire happiness necessarily...But not all desire virtue as a means of happiness...if we could glue happiness to virtue...Wisdom* Peter Kreeft
- Wisdom comes in 4 ways: experience, reasoning, seeing, and believing (faith)
 - Virtue → deep Happiness
 - Sin → deep Misery
 - How do we then sometimes choose sin?
 - *We are quite insane. We choose misery over joy.* Peter Kreeft
 - *We're all in the same boat and we're all seasick.* GK Chesterton

Reminders Before Plunging into Pride/Humility

- The Mind is the Key to Seeing Reality as it Truly is
 - Our Intellect Can Help us Become Saints (Contrary to Popular Impressions)
- Sanity is Having a Firm Grip on Reality
 - Sanity is related to Sanctity
- The Reality We Are Trying to Get a Hold of is God
 - He Doesn't need us, He Loves us Purely, He Seeks Union with Us
- Until we Recognize and Do the Hard Work of Removing the Vices there will be little or no Progress Toward Holiness → Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving, Self-examination, Confession (Repeat)
 - *Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel* → Pedagogy in Ashes



The Greatest Sin

- The Fall of the Angels
- Literally Fell from Heaven
- Only Possible Sins for a Pure Spirit are the Purely Spiritual Sins
 - Pride and Envy
- Augustine reminds us that the Devil is *"...not a fornicator nor a drunkard nor anything of the like sort, yet he is proud and envious... inflated with pride, he wished to be called God"*



Original Sin: Prototype of All Human Sin



- Original Sin Began with:
 - A Lie in the form of a Question Suggesting that God's Creation was Lacking → Not a Reality
- Original Sin then Tempted Our First Parents to Pride:
 - To Take A Self-Asserting Grasp
- Promising Happiness and Fulfillment:
 - *Your eyes will be opened...* Not a Reality
- Tempting them into Vainglory:
 - *You will be like gods ...* Not a Reality
- Into Full-scale Doubt about His Goodness Bordering on Contempt for God
 - *He's holding out on you; frustrating your fulfillment ...* Not a Reality

- **The greatest sin in man is pride...Pride is the beginning of all sin...Man's first sin was pride** ST 162-3
- **Four marks of every kind of pride of the arrogant:** (Gregory of Nyssa) ST II-II, 164, 2
 - *Their good if from themselves*
 - *If from above it is due to their own merits*
 - *Boasting of having what they have not*
 - *Wish to appear the exclusive possessors of what they have*
- **The root of pride is found to consist in man not being in some way subject to God and his rule.** ST II-II, 162, 5



The Essence of Pride

- *Pride is essentially an attitude toward God, not just toward oneself*
- *Pride is really very simple. It is the attitude of a spoiled brat*
- *Not all sins are explicitly sins of pride, some are of weakness...not all pride is mortal sin, some is only venial (reason and will may be somewhat lacking)*
- *Pride is always toxic*
- *How can we be pagans, we are not polytheists. We are, we don't worship hundreds of gods, we worship millions of gods; we worship ourselves.* Peter Kreeft

Pride / Humility

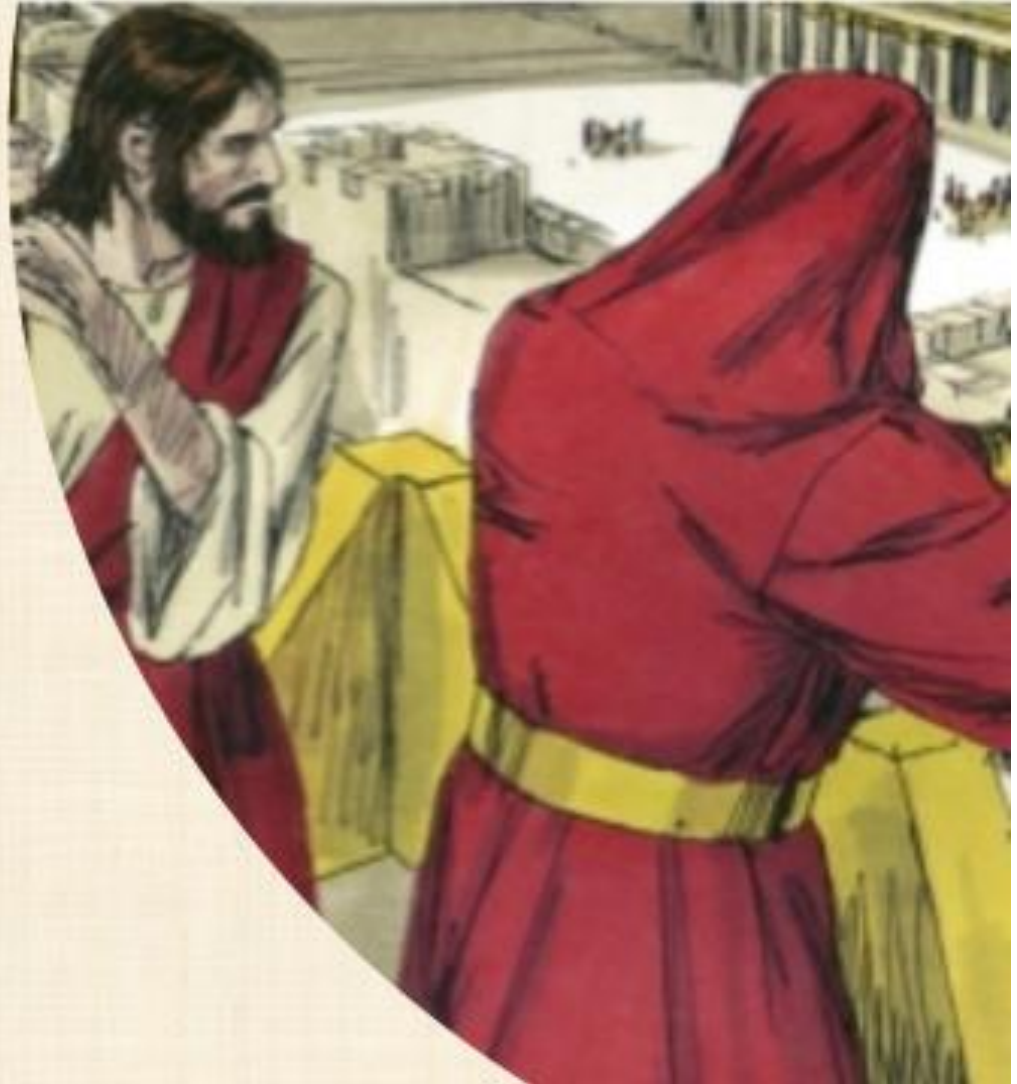
→ Humility / Pride



- **Signs of Pride:** Self-assertion and selfishness
 - *It's All About Me! I can have it All!*
- **Beatitude that Expresses Humility** → Poverty of Spirit; and selflessness)
 - Gratitude, Generosity, Appreciation
- **Antidote for Pride** → Humility
 - All that we are, have, are gifted with, even our challenges are Wise Gifts given to us by Our Loving Father who Loves us Totally

Pride vs. Humility; Self-aspiration vs. Reality

- Devil: ***I will ascend into heaven...I will be like the Most High.*** Augustine says that being ***"...inflated with pride, he (the devil) wished he could be called God.*** Summa (ST) 1, 63, 3
- Original/Angelic Original = Model of all sin
 - Why all sin breaks the first Commandment
- Pride (Like Envy) is a purely spiritual sin
 - Why we shouldn't seek spirituality
 - Vague spiritual life detached from the virtue of Religion
 - ***Cold spiritual sins are worse than hot carnal sins because there is more free will in them.*** Peter Kreeft
 - Spiritual sinners Act like devils rather than like (carnal sinners) animals



Higher Animals vs. Images of God

What Image does my mind have of us/me?



- *If we believe we are apes, we will be proud because we are very great apes, very good and smart and civilized apes.*



- *If we believe we are made in the image of God, we will be humbled by our sins and follies, by our acting like apes when we are princes and princesses. ...If apes, we are more than successes; if saints, we are more than failures, we are rebels.*
- *...beware the pride that masks as humility: "Look at me. How horribly evil I am!" Humility does not say "Look at me" at all.*

- *Where were you when I founded the earth? Tell me if you have understanding.*

Job 38, 4

- *Humility establishes our relation to God on the basis of the truth....Humility is the foundational virtue, without which we are not at all disposed to receive God's gifts...a double knowledge of the all of God and the nothingness of man...it expels pride...and makes man submissive and open to receive the influx of Divine grace...corresponds to the doctrine of Divine Providence*

Douglas Bushman

- *Humility "...is the foundation of the spiritual edifice"*

ST II-II, 161, 9, 2

- *Do you know, my daughter, who you are and who I am? You are she who is not; I am He who is.*

Catherine of Sienna, Dialogue X

- *It is when I am weak that I am strong.*

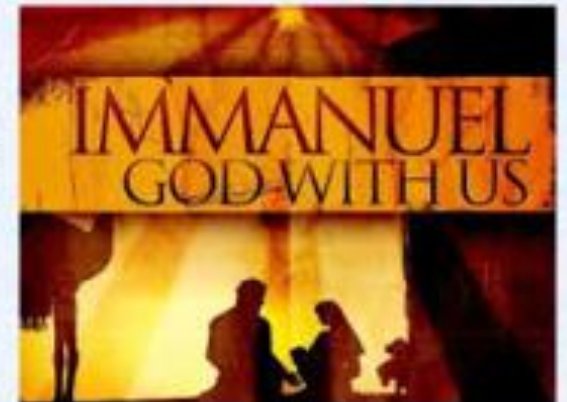
St. Paul

Do I Really Need to be Humble?



...Bethlehem, Nazareth, & Golgotha...

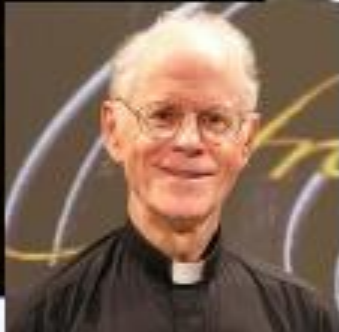
Satan got surprised by Humility because of his Pride/Blindness





I'm God. You're not.
Jesus' four-word summary of the Bible to St.
Catherine of Sienna

- We are very prone to forget the second part
 - First Commandment...
 - *How do we violate it if we're not polytheists? We are. The ancients worshipped thousands of gods but we worship millions of gods: ourselves.* Peter Kreeft
- To worship yourself is not to love yourself → that is not real, proper self-love
- *To love what is; what God created, ...what we really are, is proper self-love believing this is not pride, it's the beginning of humility* Peter Kreeft



- From *Humus* (Gr.) *Of the Earth; rooted in reality*
- Aquinas held that humility is the foundation for the entire spiritual life, because it is the disposition to receive what we need from God, and in the spiritual life, everything is Grace.
- Prayer, Disposition, etc..
- Humility allows us to the Acknowledgment of our Void
 - Opens us to be Merciful the condition for receiving Mercy
 - Overcomes Rigorism such as the Novatians
 - 70 x 7
- It belongs properly to humility, that a man restrain himself from being borne towards that which is above him. For this purpose he must know his disproportion to that which surpasses his capacity. Hence knowledge of one's own deficiency belongs to humility, as a rule guiding the appetite. Nevertheless humility is essentially in the appetite itself. (ST II-II, 161, 2)
 - The humble man restrains the impetuosity of his soul, from tending inordinately to great things : yet its rule is in the cognitive faculty in that we should not deem ourselves to be above what we are. (ST II-II, Q 161, a. 6)



Egotism vs. Humility (Judas) vs. (Peter)



- A lie in action
 - Seeks to Create the Impression that they are what they're not
- Self-will → Leads eventually to Self-hatred/disgust
 - *Has only his own ego to call upon*
- Seeks praise; justification before others
 - Credentials of his/her Worldliness
- Can't forget him/herself
 - No room for Love of God/Neighbor
- Attempts to Conceal His/Her Inferiority
 - Carries his/her faults upon his back
 - Carries faults of others in front of him/her

- Honest about His/Her Gifts and Limitations
 - *Gained the truth of their littleness*
- Finders of the Infinite
 - Has God to call upon
- Open to the Reception of Divine Gifts
 - Emptiness allows them to be filled
- Somewhat dead to what the world offers
 - Doesn't get discouraged or fall into despair
- Concentrates upon his/her errors, not on those in others → Sees the good and virtuous in others
 - *Sweet Penitence*

- *For every one who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.* Luke 14, 11
- *The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord* Job 1, 21
- *I must decrease; He must increase.* John 3, 30
- *God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble* James 4, 6
- *...with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love.* Ephesians 4, 2



Scripture on
Humility

Questions for Discussion

- When we suffer from Pride, what about our view of Reality is distorted, blind, warped(ing), ...?
- When our disposition is Humble, how are we different than when we are suffering from Pride?
- What about the virtue of Humility or deadly sin of Pride have you found to be surprising, unexpected, puzzling,