

February 21, 2023



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

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IN ALL HUMILITY

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

*"If anyone wishes to be first,
he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."*

MARK 9:35

Reflection

I am the firstborn in my family so being first is a given. However, when my siblings came along, I had to learn to share and put others first. When playing with other children at school, being first was not guaranteed, though often desirable. I remember competing among other children to be first in line, to be chosen for a team, first to be called upon in class, hand waving eagerly among other students. This is normal for children as they discover their own identity, though no less annoying. As an adult pushing myself forward to the detriment

of others is not an attractive ambition.

In the Gospel today, Jesus advises his friends to take the higher road of humility. In a careful read of the Gospels, I notice that Jesus' whole life was lived in great humility, that is, knowing who he was before God. He was deeply rooted in his identity as beloved son, though fully human. Thirty years of living in Nazareth formed him in the realization that his very existence was by God's desire and gift to him.

In the three years of his public ministry, his teaching and healing flowed from a sense of purpose, that is being the love of God in the world. He remained faithful to the desire to draw all into one with God and one another. Even when everything fell apart, he remained steadfast in his mission because he trusted the deep and personal relationship with God. He humbly knew who he was and to whom he belonged.

I think Father Médaille's Maxim 14 was well lived by Jesus and reflects the advice that *"If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."*

Maxim 14

Be humble, since whatever you have, whatever you are, or whatever you undertake for yourself, or others proceeds from the pure mercy and infinite condescension of God. You would make yourself unworthy of this, as also of God's grace which is essential, unless you were humble in every way.

Or, as summarized by College Students in Philadelphia,
God's free gift of love supports your life at every moment. Rely on it.

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Humility does not come easily to most of us, whether strong willed or more passive. Yet authentic humility deepens a person's effectiveness and beauty. Humility is required to be a truly self-actualized person. Knowing from whom my life, giftedness, talents, and personhood come, allows me to surrender awkward self-centeredness and rest secure in God. Humility leads me to ever-deepening intimacy with God.

It takes a lifetime to hone the virtue of humility which is a tremendous grace given by our God of great love. Praying for the grace to know myself as God knows me, is key to an authentic stance of humility. The secret beauty of humility flows from a deep personal relationship with God who loves me and works through me out of love. I lean on the heart of God as beloved of God serving God's people. All is gift and grace and blessing from the God who

desires to be one with each of us.



Photo by Sr. Jane DeLisle

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## For Pondering

- How do I understand humility?

- How has humility helped me to understand myself and God?
- How does humility help me be in right-relationship with God, myself, and others?

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## Closing Prayer

*Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like your own. Draw me to yourself and open in me a humble stance that is at once gentle strength and self-knowledge. May true humility open me to the experience of truth, of authentic joy, of knowing what matters, and to find my home in you. Amen*

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