

A Letter from Fr. Patrick Kizza

October 26, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“O God, Be Merciful to Me, a Sinner” — Living Humility in Everyday Life

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus tells a parable about two men who go to the temple to pray—a Pharisee and a tax collector. The Pharisee stands proudly before God, listing his virtues and comparing himself to others. The tax collector, however, stands at a distance, eyes lowered, and simply prays, *“O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”* Jesus concludes: *“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

At first glance, it's easy to distance ourselves from the Pharisee. Yet if we're honest, there are moments when his spirit lives quietly within us. We might think, *“At least I'm not like that person,”* or *“I do more than others in the parish.”* In today's world, where social media, competition, and self-promotion dominate, humility can feel out of place. But Jesus reminds us that true prayer and righteousness come not from comparing ourselves with others but from standing truthfully before God.

The tax collector teaches us how to pray from the heart. He doesn't justify himself or hide behind excuses; he opens his heart in simplicity and trust. As St. Augustine once wrote, *“Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility.”*

In our daily lives, humility means recognizing that everything we have—our talents, family, health, and opportunities—are gifts from God. The humble person does not think less of themselves; rather, they think of themselves less, as C.S. Lewis reminds us. Humility is shown in the mother who quietly serves her family, in the worker who performs duties faithfully without praise, and in the student who admits mistakes and keeps trying.

St. Teresa of Ávila once said, *“Humility is walking in truth.”* It's being honest about who we are before God—our strengths, our weaknesses, our sins, and our need for mercy. When we approach prayer like the tax collector, acknowledging our dependence on God, we open our hearts to His transforming grace.

As Christians, we are called to mirror Christ, who humbled Himself even to the point of death on a cross. In a world that rewards pride and self-promotion, the humble heart shines with quiet beauty. Jesus shows us that God listens not to the proud words of the self-satisfied, but to the silent cry of the contrite heart.

May we, like the tax collector, find the courage to pray each day: *“Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.”* For it is only when we humble ourselves before God that we are truly lifted up in His love.



Fr. Patrick