Homily by Deacon Luis P. Villanueva for 8:00-8:30 AM Mass on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at St. Joseph Church, Devine, TX.- Fr. Antonio Hernandez, Pastor-Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, amen.

Jesus reminds us today that there is a real danger when we pretend to be sincere while praying, fasting, giving alms, or other means of practicing our religious faith for gaining public recognition, praise and honor. The key word is pretend. If in our hearts we are not sincere and do it without love and devotion, then we are being what Jesus calls "hypocrites" and God is not happy with us. Religious hypocrisy means claiming to being pious while our actions do not conform.

Jesus, in the Gospel of St. Matthews, teaches us how not to conduct ourselves that we may avoid hypocrisy in our spiritual life, and in worshiping God so that we may not lose out on God's rewards of his Kingdom.

In most cases our actions do have good intentions and result in helping our neighbors with their needs. In today's readings however we learn that we are to perform acts of love and charity to and for our neighbors as commanded by God in the Ten Commandments which are summarized as "Love God above all things andyour neighbor as yourself", without being boastful about our actions.

Psychologist teach us that the deepest urge in human nature is "the desire to be important and receive attention". Newborns and children cry for it and grown men and women die for it.

However, Jesus teaches us today to grow out of a life that would show outward piety yet live a totally different un-Godly life. Jesus knows that we are always at battle with our pride, our egos, and temptations from the Evil One, and therefore wants to warn us that we may stay awake!

We are mainly taught both by the school system and by our parents to aspire to succeed and compete in the different areas of our lives. We attach titles and abbreviations before and after our names, assign positions of authority, uniforms with badges and pins, chain of command, decorate our bodies, our offices, homes, vehicles and even speak in different tones to distinguish ourselves and our level of importance.

We may even have streets, buildings, windows and even cemeteries with our names on them as another way of being recognized or honored. In some cases we may even have charitable organizations named after us to recognize our charitable efforts because our deepest urge is "the desire to be important and receive attention".

And Jesus knowing this, reminds us in today's gospel that we must keep our prayers and acts of charity and repentance in proper perspective, and in secret, remaining servants in the love of God and neighbor, as we live out our daily Christian faith.

Jesus calls us to surrender our hearts to the Lord that our hearts may be restored as his dwelling place that his Grace, his Light, his holiness, his love, power and authority and all that he is will radiate from and through us as his Kingdom grows to bring blessings and produce abundant works of love, mercy. The Gospel Acclamation verse reminds us of Jesus' words "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him and we will come to him". God bless you.

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Jesús nos recuerda hoy que existe un peligro real cuando pretendemos ser sinceros mientras oramos, ayunamos, damos limosnas u otros medios de practicar nuestra fe religiosa para ganar reconocimiento público, alabanza y honor. La palabra clave es "pretender". Si en nuestro corazón no somos sinceros y lo hacemos sin amor y devoción, entonces estamos siendo lo que Jesús llama "hipócritas" y Dios no está contento con nosotros. La hipocresía significa pretender ser piadoso mientras nuestras acciones no se ajustan.

Jesús, en el Evangelio de San Mateo, nos enseña cómo no comportarnos para evitar la hipocresía en nuestra vida espiritual y en adorar a Dios para no perder las recompensas de Dios en su Reino.

En la mayoría de los casos, nuestras acciones tienen buenas intenciones y resultan en ayudar a nuestros vecinos con sus necesidades. Sin embargo, en las lecturas de hoy aprendemos que debemos realizar actos de amor y caridad hacia y para nuestro prójimo como lo ordena Dios en los Diez Mandamientos que se resumen como "Amar a Dios sobre todas las cosas y a tu prójimo como a ti mismo", sin jactarnos de nuestras acciones.

Los psicólogos nos enseñan que el impulso más profundo de la naturaleza humana es "el deseo de ser importante y recibir atención". Los recién nacidos y los niños lloran por ella y los hombres y mujeres adultos mueren por ella.

Sin embargo, Jesús nos enseña hoy a crecer a partir de una vida que mostraría piedad exterior y sin embargo vivir una vida impía totalmente diferente. Jesús sabe que siempre estamos en batalla con nuestro orgullo, nuestro ego y las tentaciones del Maligno, iY por lo tanto quiere advertirnos que podemos permanecer despiertos!

Y Jesús, sabiendo esto, nos recuerda en el evangelio de hoy que debemos mantener nuestras oraciones y actos de caridad y arrepentimiento en la perspectiva adecuada, y en secreto, siendo siervos en el amor de Dios y del prójimo, mientras vivimos nuestra fe cristiana diaria.

Jesús nos llama a entregar nuestro corazón al Señor para que nuestro corazón sea restaurado como su morada para que su gracia, su luz, su santidad, su amor, poder y autoridad y todo lo que él es se manifieste desde y a través de nosotros. Que su Reino creca para traer bendiciones y producir abundantes obras de amor, y misericordia. El versículo de Aclamación del Evangelio nos recuerda las palabras de Jesús: "El que me ama, cumplirá mi palabra, y mi Padre lo amará y iremos a él". Dios los bendiga.