

# Meditation 6

## HUMILITY, Part II

### Review of Part I:

In the first meditation, based on an understanding of the “Litany of Humility,” you should have been able to identify and list certain tendencies of pride that you are particularly prone to. Those four areas would be...

- a. the **desires** that you pridefully strive and grasp for in order to make you happy, which produce anxiety, restlessness and stress, while at the same time block you from the happiness that God wants to give you.
- b. the **fears** that come from your pride due to your unwillingness to endure some *unjust* suffering, and the anxious avoidance “at all costs” that your fear drives.
- c. **not wanting the good for the other** out of a prideful notion that others can’t be better than you or more gifted than you.
- d. **the lack of acceptance of personal sufferings**, the prideful rejection of following Christ by taking up your cross, keeping you from valuing suffering in a positive way, acting as though Jesus’ suffering on the cross has no personal effect in your life.

You have personalized the “Litany of Humility” by plucking out and writing down your own “Litany of Pride”. Congratulations on your list of personal, concrete prideful sins! You’re ready for the next step.

### Part II:

**Part II is a reflection based on the *Fundamental Attitude of Humility*.**

Whereas the “Litany of Humility” gave us personal awareness of certain prideful tendencies we might be guilty of the “Fundamental Attitude of Humility” tries to pinpoint more what a humble life and outlook should look like.

### Understanding the Fundamental Attitude of Humility:

#### 1. **Living humility makes us more comfortable and happier.**

- We are more comfortable and happy living life with the discipline that virtues provide.

**2. Humility as a quality is another way of saying a person is realistic, honest.**

- A person practicing humility is a person who accepts both the fact that he/she is *worthwhile and limited* on all levels of who we are: spiritually, physically and emotionally.
- God has created him/her and so they have ultimate value in His eyes; they are *worthwhile*, invaluable.

**3. A humble person sees themselves as both worthwhile and limited.**

- We also have been given talents and abilities that are unique and contribute to making us the person that we are.
- Accepting our worthwhileness is important to our emotional and spiritual well-being.
- Every person also has a unique set of limitations.
- We didn't choose our limitations, that is, our weaknesses, defects and frailties, but they make us part of who we are, too.
- These need to be accepted, too, in order for us to achieve humility.

**4. A humble person is unafraid to admit mistakes and failures.**

- Mistakes and failures are inevitable in the course of life. We are human.
- A person who is humble, who accepts the fact that they are limited, finds it easier to admit mistakes and failures.

**5. A humble person understands that failures do not take away their dignity as a person.**

- Since failure is part of being an imperfect human being in an imperfect world, there is no need to judge our worthwhileness in a negative way.
- Nor should we allow ourselves to be affected by others who judge us for not succeeding, especially when those "others" may be the cause of our failure.
- There are times when we look like we have failed in the eyes of the world but have succeeded in our Christianity.

**6. A humble person is open to other persons' perceptions of themselves.**

- We do not have the necessary objectivity about ourselves to have a more complete understanding of ourselves.
- A humble person knows this and will seek the necessary advice of a trusted person to help them grow humanly and spiritually.

- 7. A humble person does not need to hide the truth about who they are from themselves and others.**
- There is a certain truth about who we are that can't be changed.
  - God has given us a way to manage our limitations through spiritual practices, always with the hope that "Christ can repair all things in me."
  - Unpretentious people, who have an appealing and human way of openly interacting with others, are probably very accepting of the truth and reality about who they are.
- 8. A humble person lives comfortably with reality as it is.**
- Whether it is criticism, failures, or personal limitations that are obvious to others in our personality, the admission of these personal characteristics to God, ourselves and others comes from the practice of humility and leads to comfortably living each day humbly in practice.
- 9. A humble person does not need to exaggerate their abilities to impress others.**
- Another word for exaggerating our abilities is to brag.
  - Bragging is lying. Like it is a sin to lie, it is a sin to brag.
  - A humble person experiences the freedom that comes from accepting their talents without need for manipulating for the additional attention of others or showing superiority.
- 10. A humble person is not embarrassed to admit when they do something well.**
- On the other hand, a humble person does not reject compliments about something they do well.
  - All our talent and successes are on loan from God.
- 11. A humble person is convinced that their own vision, wisdom and answers are too limited to ensure that their own solution to a problem guarantees the right one.**
- Our tendency is to have confidence in addressing the "world problems," whether they be local or global.
  - While it is fine to have our opinions, it is prideful to have certainty that our personal vision, wisdom and answers need to be taken in order for the world to be at peace
  - Some self-doubt for the right answers, and detachment from our own answers, indicates humility.

**12. A humble person does not give exclusive significance or all-importance to any one moment of life, be that success or tragedy.**

- Some people mark their lives with a sole reference point by either a success or tragedy they have experienced.
- They are not living in the present moment where different challenges offer them a way to successfully define themselves.
- Others may have genuinely experienced a past tragedy in their lives that continues to negatively impact the way they live in the present moment.
- By holding on to grief instead of accepting it as a part of the suffering of life, a suffering we can easily offer to God that allows us to live on comfortably and peacefully, they've made tragedy a barrier to growing as a whole person and a child of God.
- God's plan is always for us to have a greater life, and in the end eternal life with Him.

**13. A humble person recognizes and can live sometimes with the fact that they are flesh and blood, a combination of sometimes balanced sometimes unruly intellect and emotions.**

- The frailty of our nature is traditionally called concupiscence, literally translated – “the tinder for sin” (CCC #1264).
- We are “flesh and blood, a combination of sometimes balanced sometimes unruly intellect and emotions.”
- Helping someone to accept their humanness and telling them it is easier to turn toward others and God to deal or overcome their weaknesses than to fight them alone gives them an alternative to their ongoing, failed struggle.
- If someone needs further encouragement, tell them that a courageous person accepts their weaknesses and turns toward others and God for help. This is the human way, the way toward becoming fully human.

**14. A humble person strives for a reasonable degree of self-sufficiency, while being able to accept the need to depend on others.**

- This line gives us a way to think about relationships.
  - a. We are first and foremost dependent on God.
  - b. We cannot get through life without the help of others, nor can they get through life without our help. In this sense we are inter-dependent.
  - c. A mature adult acts this way yet strives to be as responsible as they can in their personal living, so as not to be an unnecessary burden to others.
  - d. This we could describe as a “reasonable self-sufficiency.”

- An attachment to God is necessary and what God wants; that is why He calls us His children.
- To act like a child by being dependent on another is a dependency that does not allow for the development of the person.
- In this sense we trade our dependence on God and replace Him with another.

**15. A humble person can admit to doing some things well and allows others to esteem them.**

- As long as we are careful about not bragging about our talent, acknowledge that God's gifts are on loan to us, and show gratitude for the undeserved talents we have been given, we're safely in the zone of humility.
- Our added value, due to the particular gifts we have been given, is something that needs to be used for the good of others.
- Usually such a person knows that the goodness that they are able to do is from God and must be shared for the sake of others.

**16. A humble person is open and vulnerable.**

- Humility strengthens us to the point of being vulnerable in our openness to others. A humble child of God is not lessened or destroyed when criticized.
- They see in this God's way of chastening them (Hebrews 12:6), a help, a purification meant to bring them closer to Him and become more effective in the work of bringing others to Him.
- Mentors should counsel accepting criticisms for evaluation so that whatever truth is in the criticism can be used to help a mentee grow.

**17. A humble person admits they are able to fail and be limited.**

- Admitting the fact that we are limited and can fail is to admit to the human condition.
- Once a person comes to the point of accepting themselves and is no longer devastated by their failures and limitations, they have finally entered the human race.

**18. A humble person is not surprised at and patiently accepts the laughable incongruities of their lives and patiently accepts the struggles and foibles of others.**

- We all have them: inconsistencies, struggles and shortcomings.
- A humble person can admit them and laugh at them, demonstrating patience with himself, as well as the capacity to be patient with others, not surprised of his own humanness or that of others.

**19. A humble person recognizes that life is never within their grasp, and that fundamentally life is unmanageable and out of their control.**

- For the Christian this statement is one that points out our fundamental need for God.
- People who have physical, emotional and/or moral problems have to come to terms with their powerlessness.
- The blessings we receive from God are free of anxiety and fear. They leave one's heart full of gratitude not marred by the sin of pride.

**20. A humble person makes their offering, in their work and opinion, offering their best, but not upset when it is challenged or anxious when they cannot predict or control the ultimate outcome of our efforts.**

- Knowing that we are worthwhile and limited, knowing that we are sometimes unbalanced in our thoughts and emotions, knowing that we are capable of both failure and doing some things well, being vulnerable to what each day brings, patient with ourselves and others to the point that we can laugh at our helplessness as a child with God as our Father, we offer what we can.

**21. A humble person is at ease with themselves in a mysterious, vast, complex and changing world.**

- A humble person not only understands this but feels it. They can navigate the world and the passage of time in an easier way than the person who is prideful. They can become a saint.

**22. A humble person does what they ought in a comfortable manner.**

- We can speak of going through the task of daily living as “doing what we ought to do,” and “not doing what we ought not to do.”
- A humble person is able to move through the “ought's” and “ought not's” of life with interior and exterior calm. With God at our side, we can manage to live each day.

### Instruction for Resolution:

Go through the Intrapersonal Perspective as an examination of conscience concerning your worthwhileness and limitations. Remember acceptance of them is a way to gauge your pride/humility. List those you fail to respect as a part of your “Litany of Pride” sins for Confession.

## Prayer for Humility:

*Lord, help me to conquer my pride. May I love you above myself. Remind me to keep in mind my love for You when other desires, fears, envy, jealousy and small-heartedness tempt me away from You, pushing me alone into myself. I want the happiness You have planned to give me, rather than what I obsessively grasp at to make myself happy. I prefer Your heavenly blessings in the present moment as well as the future rather than my manipulating for happiness that gains for me only earthly treasures.*

*Help me to be honest in my relationship with You. You made me worthwhile, as your son or daughter, gifted humanly and spiritually, while also limited with weaknesses, defects, and frailties. Help me to accept that I am both worthwhile and limited. When confronted with my limitations, weaknesses, defects, and frailties, remind me to turn to You as my heavenly Father for the help You so want to give me, for peace, health, and satisfaction in fulfilling Your plan for my life. It is Your plan that I want, not the short-sighted ambitious plan I imagine for myself. Your plan is sureness in fulfilling me beyond my imagination, while my plan is sadly self-centered and small minded.*

*In moments of doubt, let me vulnerably turn to you. Let your Spirit be heard in me with an act of faith trusting in Jesus' care amidst self-doubt.*

*When seemingly invincible flashes of pride rise in me, may they be melted easily and tenderly away with Hail Mary's, opening me to learn the way of humility, in the School of the Holy Family, the way Jesus, Mary and Joseph lived on earth and now continue to live in heaven. Amen.*

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