



## Things to Ponder

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## Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time – Luke 7:36-50

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Dear Friends,

At the very beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola, the one on retreat is asked to *pray for the grace to see him/her self as God does*. When we examine our consciences, we often acknowledge that our spiritual lives are rather mediocre. They seem to lack passion or fervor. Although consolation in prayer is a gift we cannot merit or cause, we can inhibit growth in the spirit by our lack of forgiveness. It is often easier to ask forgiveness than to grant it; but, in either case, engaging in the process involves risking a certain degree of vulnerability. We often stubbornly nurse a grudge that deepens the alienation between us, even when we might have forgotten the original source of conflict. The real sin is pride.

The Pharisees were offended by the boldness of the woman who crashed their dinner party with Jesus. (Today's Gospel, Luke 7:36-50). They snickered about her poor choice of work (likely prostitution) without reflecting on the possible conditions that might have led her in that direction. She knew her sin and was overwhelmed by Love. Those who are unaware of their sins often love little. Once forgiven by Jesus, the sinner can accept that he/she is lovable.

I sense such awareness fueled the zeal of St. Paul who said to the people of Galatia:

“I have been crucified with Christ; yet I love, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.”

(Galatians, 2, 19-20)

Yours in Him,

*Rev. Bill Foley*

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