



## Things to Ponder

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### Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – Luke 20:27-38

Dear Parish Family,

In recent years, the word martyr has been used by misguided extremists to justify their self-destruction for the sake of their radical religious and political persuasion. The Greek word martyr simply means witness. The key witness of the Christian is to the resurrection. The notion of a resurrection of the body grew in acceptance among many Jews before the time of Christ. In fact, the Pharisee party was a champion of this belief.

Our first reading from the Second Book of Maccabees describes in graphic detail the sufferings of one family for the sake of their adherence to the Law and Jewish tradition, at a time when the Greek Empire sought to blot out all trace of Judaism. Their sacrifice was made in the light of a future resurrection. These devout Jews were the ancestors of the Pharisees. At the time of Jesus, many of the Jewish leaders were adherents to the sect of the Sadducees. They ridiculed those who believed in a future resurrection. The error of the group known as Pharisees in Jesus' day was an over-emphasis on the works performed to be deemed righteous and, thus, meritorious of resurrection. The error of the Sadducees was their lack of hope. The Christian lives in the moment and reassures the gift of life and longs for its fulfillment in a kingdom that has no end! Thus, our prayer becomes that of St. Paul for the Thessalonians:

*“May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ.”  
(2 Thessalonians, 3,5)*

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Bill Foley*

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