



**Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan
February 9 – February 15**

1 -- "He has done all things well." (Mk 7:37)
...Certainly, we admire the Lord; are we trying to think as he does?

2 – "We speak God's wisdom." (1 Cor 2:7)
...Am I conveying the wisdom of God in my speech?

3 -- "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd." (Mk 8:2)
...Is my heart being moved with care and concern for ALL others?

4 -- "Watch out, guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." (Mk 8:15)

HYPOCRISY

**"Beware of the leaven—that is, the hypocrisy—of the Pharisees."
(Luke 12:1)**

***"This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."
(Mark 7:6)***

**"Watch out, guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."
(Mark 8:15)**

**"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites."
(Matthew 23:13)**

There was a popular song out a number of years ago by the rock group Genesis that was entitled "Jesus He Knows Me." Some of the lyrics are these:

Do you see the face on the TV screen, coming at you every Sunday? That man is me. You buy a piece of paradise, you buy a piece of me. Don't need to believe in hereafter: just believe in me. 'Cause Jesus he knows me and he knows I'm right. I've been talking to Jesus all my life. I believe in the family with my ever loving wife beside me, but she don't



know about my girlfriend. Won't find me practicing what I'm preaching, won't find me making a sacrifice. But I can get you a pocketful of miracles. I've found true happiness 'cause I'm getting richer day by day. If you wanna get closer to him, get on your knees and start *paying*. [emphasis mine]

It is a song obviously lashing out at TV evangelists especially with their pleas for money.

The song is not far from the thought of Jesus concerning the evangelists of his day—the scribes and the Pharisees. But it was not money they were after—it was *power*, power that came by way of honor and authority. And so Jesus says:

Do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. ... All their works are performed to be seen.

Or in other words: do not be hypocrites.

Hypocrisy is an interesting phenomenon to talk about. It is an automatic trap or problem area for anyone who gives direction to others: priests, ministers, teachers, parents, legislators, anyone showing leadership of others. In our case, it is anyone who chooses to do something good that others see, and therefore anyone going to Church. For whatever reason, we go to Church, and in doing so, we say to the world: "I believe in God through Jesus Christ." We must listen to Jesus in the Gospel today. It is possible to say 'I believe', and not put it into practice.

We should be very interested in what we say in Church. We say strong words during the service, words like, we *believe*, we *will*, we *do*. We must truly listen to what we say and do. We receive the Lord in the words of the Gospel and in the Eucharist. How can someone receive the Lord and with the same mouth tear down someone else or allow foul language to come out of it? How can someone receive the Lord and continue a life-style that makes a shambles of a marriage or parenting? How can we miss the sacredness of life itself by being bitter and angry most of the time? Or refusing to see the good in life?

How? — According to Jesus, we have allowed religion to be nothing more than something to be seen or performed.

What's the antidote to hypocrisy, how do we stay away from it? Jesus says:

The greatest among you must be your servant.

Service—the way to keep ourselves from the hypocrisy of saying one thing and doing another is to work on behalf of others. Serve people, give to them without expecting anything in return, make others feel important because they are—really.

By the very fact that we go to Church, we are making a statement to the world outside that we believe in Jesus Christ. We must realize that we

SHAPING THE FRANCISCAN FOOTPRINT
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could be hypocrites... or if we carry through, we could be people who are helping this world.

5 – “He saw clearly.” (Mk 8:25)

...The blind man finally saw clearly. Is it clear to me that the Lord is truly acting in my life