



*Reflection on the Scriptures of the Day*  
*by Deacon Bob McAllen*  
*of Holy Cross Parish*

*Wednesday of the Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time*

We are living the days of the "participation trophy" when everyone is rewarded for just showing up. No one is allowed to excel beyond another, no one can be less than another; though in real life we know that there are some who can do things better than us and we can do some things better than them. It's OK! but we somehow are not supposed to recognize it.

I remember being in second grade and we had a series of things to recite before the whole class and when we did, we got a star on the chart posted on the wall. One of the items was the Lord's Prayer. Catholics in town were a very small minority and I recited the prayer but didn't get the star because the teacher wasn't Catholic. I didn't know the other lines because we hadn't been taught them. At the end of the year there was one gaping hole on the chart with no star...by my name. Ironically my teacher's name was Mrs. Friend. Can't say that I am personally scarred by the event. And I have learned the other lines because we say them daily at mass. Today such progress charts in education are outlawed, lest someone might have fewer stars than another.

Today's gospel encourages us to do what is right not because it will get us a certificate to hang on the wall or a star on the chart, or any recognition for that matter, but simply because it is right. If we continually focus to do the best that we can do at whatever we have to do, then we shouldn't look over our shoulder to see if we are doing it the best or if someone might be better or not. When we give our all to God, that's the best it can be. There is no reason to compare.

Wouldn't it be ideal if we could be so intent on what our conscience and situation in life ask that we don't worry about the crowds, the publicity, or who might notice.