

**THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**  
**October 27, 2019**  
**Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18 + Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18 + Luke 18:9-14**



**Reflection by Carol Van Billiard, OP**

The Pharisees got a lot of bad press from Jesus. Why? Most of them were business men or leaders of synagogues. They fasted severely twice a week for the good of the nation. They tithed and did other good works as well. It was their attitude that Jesus rejected. They thought themselves above others. They were “above the law,” but imposed it on others. Jesus rejected their attitude of pride and arrogance and of not recognizing their inability to win heaven on their own.

Jesus told of a Pharisee and a tax collector being in the temple together. The Pharisee boasted, “I’m glad I’m not like the rest of men.” The tax collector, despised by his own people because of his collaboration with those who occupied his country, stood back hoping not to be noticed. His attitude, his very posture showed his dependence on God’s mercy and his recognition of God’s loving forgiveness. He wouldn’t even raise his eyes to heaven.

So, where do we see ourselves in this Gospel? As the Pharisee who thought he had his act together? As the tax collector who knew he didn’t? Somewhere in the middle?

“I’m glad I am like the rest of humanity.” We are all alike. We are all sinners. We are all saved. Thanks be to God!