



# Rosary Reflections

## The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

*According to the Gospel of Luke*

### Introduction

This Rosary reflection is about humility in prayer. The parable is a story that contrasts two people, and two styles of praying - one from self-righteousness and one from being humble before God. Humans cannot produce righteousness before God; only God provides righteousness to those who are humble to ask for and receive God's grace.

The "Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector" is found only in the Gospel of Luke. The full passage is Luke 18:9-14.

### What to Remember

These Gospel verses reflect the need for humility before God, recognizing that God is God and we are not. The Pharisee was an "insider," holding a position esteemed by the Jewish community, who prayed "to himself" and justified his own actions. The tax collector was an "outsider," not loved by the Jewish community, yet his lowly position before God was enough to receive God's mercy.

As a follower of Jesus, and a child of God, you have the privilege to seek God's mercy and forgiveness for any sins. Ask Mary's humble prayers to help you receive God's mercy.

### What to Pray For

- For the humility to ask God for mercy and God's grace to accept God's righteousness.
- For those who are self-righteous in their own eyes, that they may see God's mercy at work in all people.
- For those who don't know how to pray, who have forgotten or become discouraged in seeking God's love and mercy.
- For all leaders and people of influence to become humble and meek when praying.

Feel free to pray the rosary for a deeper humility as you pray to God, not yourself.

### The Five Decades

When you pray the five decades of this Rosary Reflection, use these five moments from the Scripture passage. Read the verses for each decade and let the words sink in as you pray that decade.

#### First Decade: Jesus Tells a Parable (Luke 18:9)

*Jesus addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else.*

#### Second Decade: Two People Praying at the Temple (Luke 18:10)

*"Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector."*

#### Third Decade: The Pharisee's Prayer (Luke 18:11-12)

*"The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity-greedy, dishonest, adulterous - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.'"*

#### Fourth Decade: The Tax Collector's Prayer (Luke 18:13)

*But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'*

#### Fifth Decade: Jesus' Teaching on Humility in Prayer (Luke 18:14)

*"I tell you, the latter went home justified, but not the former; for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."*