Scriptures for Nov. 5th

Overall themes: The grave responsibility of spiritual fatherhood and the joy of humble service

First Reading: Malachi 1: 14b-2:2b, 8-10

**Summary:** In the last book of the Old Testament, the prophet sharply reproaches the priests and leaders of the Israelites for their laxity and indifference toward God their Creator.

**+ The vocation angle:** The “obedience of faith” is not just believing certain religious ideas are true, but shaping our entire lives in ac­cordance with those truths. This gets very practical when applied to our vocations. If I give my whole life to God, what exactly does He want me to do? And if am called to leadership in the Church, will I respond faithfully?.

Psalm 131:1-3

“In you, Lord, I have found my peace.” For those discerning their vocations, this psalm is a consolation and a guide. The question for young people is, “In what state of life will I find God’s peace?”

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13

**Summary:** St. Paul tenderly recalls his hard work in Thessalonica, and rejoices in the people’s response.

**+ The vocation angle:** St. Paul loved the Thessalonians “as a nursing mother cares for her children.” Celibate priests, sisters, and brothers do not live loveless lives! Rather, like parents, they are filled with love toward their spiritual children, rejoicing when they grow into maturity in Christ.

# Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12

**Summary:** The Pharisees preach but do not practice, lording over those they lead. Jesus calls us instead to humble service: “The greatest among you must be your servant.”

**+ The vocation angle:** When Pope Francis was elected, he bowed before the world and asked for prayers, showing that in the Chris­tian life, there are different calls, but not different classes. The Fa­ther assigns differing roles, but has the same love for each of His children. Thus the question is not, “How can I rise above?” but “Who can I humbly serve?” In the best marriages, spouses put each other first. The most effective priests make parishioners their prior­ity. The holiest nuns and brothers “do small tasks with great love.” The key to discovering one’s vocation is casting aside the quest for status and pleasure and focusing on service. After all, one of the titles of the Pope himself is “the Servant of the Servants of God.”