



Fr. Matt's Musings

June 29, 2018

Studying a foreign language can be a humbling and frustrating experience. Many have expressed those same sentiments about learning English. Think of the subtleties and nuances of these sentences:

Since there is no time like the **present**, he thought it was time to **present** the **present**.

A **bass** was painted on the head of the **bass** drum.

When shot at, the **dove** **dove** into the bushes.

I did not **object** to the **object**.

The farm was used to **produce** **produce**.

Learning another language has been a humbling experience and has taught me some empathy and compassion. Above are just five examples of the nuances that exist in English. There are hundreds more. Think of how to teach someone to pronounce, "ough:" tough, through, thought, though. I am happy to have grown up with English as my first language and admire those who try to master it as a second or third language.

Humility, empathy and compassion are wonderful virtues. They ask us to try to enter into the world of others, to realize that my way of thinking and seeing the world and others is not the only way or maybe not always the best way. In the gospels, Jesus routinely enters into the lives of others: the sick, the sinner, the marginalized, the foreigner, the poor and the forgotten. His fame spread as a miracle worker and a preacher but in his one on one encounters, it is his ability to enter into that individual's life and world, to offer acceptance, affirm individual dignity and remind all that they are beloved in God's eyes that change people. Many complain that civility is not present in much of our public discourse. As followers of Christ, I ask us to practice humility, compassion and empathy as a remedy against negativity, fear

and hate.

Live Jesus!

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