

Today is the memorial of Pope St. Callistus I, who was pope in the early part of the third century.

At that time, there was a controversy in the Church regarding marriage ... 1800 years ago, the controversy was about marriages between slaves and free persons.

Pope Callistus had been a slave, and sought a more generous perspective.

Other than his martyrdom around 223 AD, little else is known about Callistus. The only surviving records about him are written by his contemporary, St. Hippolytus, who was also his biggest opponent.

In the Gospel today, Jesus speaks on external observance vs. internal disposition.

These aren't necessarily mutually exclusive. However, what is important is integrity - that is, not only living a good Christian life in our action ... but also having a heart that abides in Christian principals.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray for the grace of integrity - may we in thought, word, and deed - live out our lives in Christian virtue ... may Faith, Hope, and Love be seen in all that we say and do, and may the Theological Virtues abide in our hearts, minds, and souls.